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June 1995

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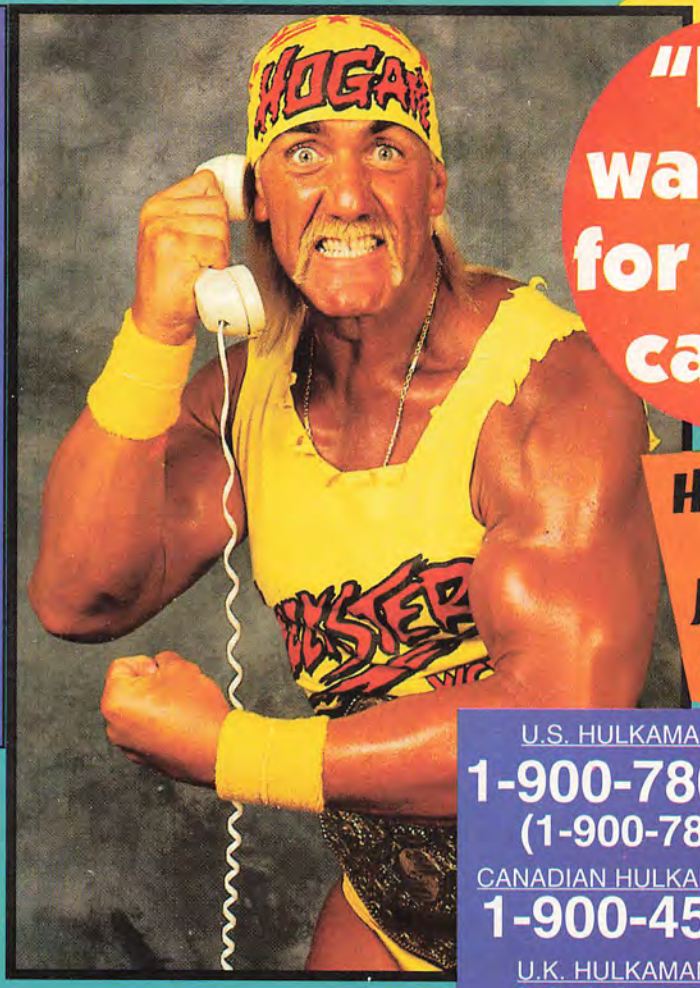

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CONTENTS / JUNE 1995

4 **YOUR LETTERS**
Name Game; Ducking The Undead; Stupid Is As ...

6 **WHAT'S HAPPENING by Bill Apter**
All the hottest news from around the world of wrestling

8 **NO HOLDS BARRED with David Rosenbaum**
Wrestlers can be so (too?) forgiving

10 **BLINDSIDED by Andy Rodriguez**
Jerry Lawler isn't as two-faced as he appears

12 **THUMBS UP, THUMBS DOWN**
Cheering the good and lambasting the evil

14 **CORRESPONDENTS REPORTS**
Details on important recent matches

16 **YOU ASKED US**
Your favorite stars answer your questions

18 **INTRODUCING MANTAUR**
Jim Cornette's latest find has invaded the WWF

20 **Q & A: AVALANCHE**
The big man has a lot to say about what's going on in WCW

24 **X-RAY: RANDY SAVAGE**
Our panel examines the popular "Macho Man"

26 ***THE WRESTLER* CLASSIC (June 1980)**
"If The Fans Knew The Truth—They Would Hate Bob Backlund!"

30 **BONUS SECTION: THE WRESTLING BOOK OF LISTS**
We have the hottest lists in this special 18-page section!

48 **HE'S BARKING ... AND READY TO BITE: THE BRITISH BULLDOG DEMANDS A TITLE SHOT—NOW!**
Things might get ugly if he doesn't get one

52 **OUR EXPERT ANALYSIS REVEALS: BIG BUBBA ROGERS IS A PSYCHOLOGICAL BASKET CASE!**
Dr. Sidney M. Basil is disturbed by what he sees

56 **IS IT WORTH THE WEIGHT? IMAGINE THE KID ... 250 POUNDS OF RAW MUSCLE!**
Sounds great, but it would ruin his career!

60 **ALEX WRIGHT HAS ALL THE MOVES! AND SOME OF THEM ARE DURING THE MATCH!**
We could do without the prematch dance routine

64 **WHEN BROTHER TURNS AGAINST BROTHER ... SOMETHING'S ROTTEN IN ECW!**
Ian and Axl Rotten make the Bret-Owen war look civilized

80 **SPOTLIGHT ON THE UNDERTAKER**
Looking back at the career of the ghoulish WWF fan favorite

82 **MATT BROCK'S LOOKING BACK**
May 1978: Boris Malenko vs. Ronnie Garvin

84 **OFFICIAL WRESTLING RATINGS**
The mat sport's most respected rankings

86 **RATINGS ANALYSIS**
Is Flair back; Has Brutus changed again?

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YOUR LETTERS

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The Guardian Angel had very little success against Big Van Vader and is now calling himself Big Bubba Rogers again. Readers Bryan and Lauren Berson applaud the name change.

NAME GAME

The man who used to call himself The Guardian Angel has a problem. He has held a few titles during his career, but his main problem is that he lacks the self-confidence and desire that he must have in order to win consistently. He was quite intense when he began his career as Big Bubba Rogers, but he achieved little when he wanted to be known as the Big Bossman, and even less when he was The Boss.

While reading the "Spotlight" feature on The Guardian Angel (February 1995), we saw a photo of the old Big Bubba Rogers and quickly noted how much more impressive he looked in 1987. When we contrasted this photo with a picture of him as The Guardian Angel, we realized why his career was at a standstill. The Guardian Angel received no respect.

Now that he has completed the cycle and once again become Bubba Rogers, he will muster enough confidence and respect to beat Hulk Hogan and become the champion that he is meant to be. As a fan favorite or a rulebreaker, Big Bubba Rogers will be unstoppable, just as he was before.

BRYAN BERSON
LAUREN BERSON
West Islip, NY

DUCKING THE UNDEAD

The Undertaker has been consistently in the top five in your WWF ratings for some time now, but he never seems to get any title shots against any of the so-called fighting champions, like Diesel or Jeff Jarrett. Now it seems that he will never get a title shot. I think that these men are all afraid to take on the most dominant force in the WWF today. If these champions are really the fighting champions that they say they are, they'd give Undertaker a chance. Prove that you are fighting champions and face The Undertaker. I guarantee he will emerge victorious.

JAMIE WILSON
Linden, NJ

"Bumbling fool" Dave Sullivan does not deserve all the attention he is getting in WCW right now, writes Kurt Schulz.

STUPID IS AS ...

Your heads must be full of rocks for giving Dave Sullivan a "Thumbs Up" in your March 1995 issue. How can you even seriously consider the idea that Dave should be wrestling for any kind of title now? This bum is the equivalent of Hacksaw Duggan during his WWF tenure—a bumbling fool whom the little kiddies just happened to like. Why this guy—or Hulk Hogan, Duggan, or any godawful old former WWF mainstay—is wasting valuable space in the WCW top 10 is beyond me. While these losers flourish, real, talented wrestlers like Sting, Big Van Vader, and Lord Steven Regal are wasted just so these glory hounds can prance and preen for the toddlers who think that the garbage shown nowadays is real wrestling.

I hope Ted Turner can sleep soundly at night, because what he has done to WCW is a shame. Bring back Ric Flair and Tully Blanchard and all of the real wrestlers! Bring back "I Quit" matches! Bring back exciting, scientific matches! Bring back memorable feuds, and get rid of the current playground squabbles that pass for feuds!

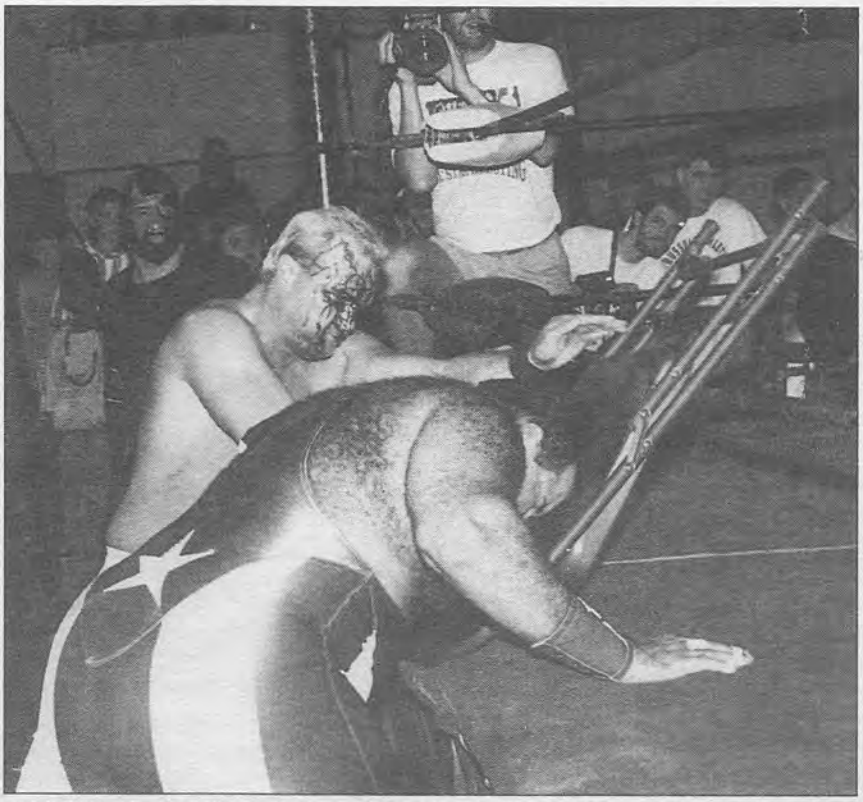
KURT SCHULZ
Benton Harbor, MI

REMEMBERING GILBERT

I think it is a shame that so many wrestlers are taken before their time. Eddie Gilbert now joins the infamous ranks that includes Bruiser Brody, Kerry Von Erich, Art Barr, and Gino Hernandez to name a few. Gilbert's death shocked every one of his fans, including me.

Gilbert thrived on gore and blood, as many of his matches showed. Whether it was battling Terry Funk in a chain match or brutalizing Johnny Gunn and Tracey Smothers in a tournament, he loved the violence and blood that

(Continued on page 68)



Eddie Gilbert joined the list of wrestlers taken before their time writes reader Arlene Enders. Gilbert never cared for titles, but he will always be a champion in her heart.

WHAT'S HAPPENING

By Bill Apter

AT PRESS TIME, **Sid Vicious** was preparing to return to the WWF, as **Shawn Michaels'** bodyguard. Vicious had been holding out on signing with the "Heartbreak Kid" because he was afraid he would be stripped of the USWA title. The USWA demands that its champion defend the title at least once every 30 days, and had Sid come to the WWF while he was still champion, he might not have been able to honor his USWA obligations.

But, on February 6, Sid lost the heavyweight title to **Jerry Lawler**. The next day, Vicious called Shawn and accepted the offer. I'm told that Vicious was one of five wrestlers Michaels had considered for the job. I got in touch with him only an hour after he finalized the deal.

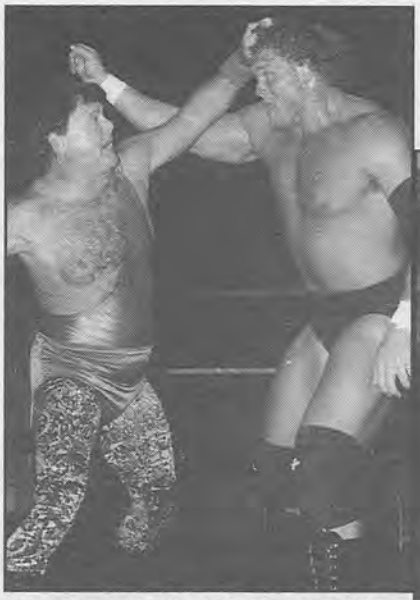
"Before I discuss Shawn Michaels, I want to discuss **The Spellbinder**," Vicious growled. "I told him never to interfere in my matches again. So what does he do? He interferes, punches me instead of Lawler, and I wind up an ex-champ! It stinks! And the relationship I have with Shawn is none of your business. Whatever deal we work out is between us. All I can say is: **Diesel**, you have never come across anyone like me. Get in my face, and you'll be history!"

Sounds to me like Sid wants more than to be a mere bodyguard. Isn't that kind of like what happened shortly after Michaels hired Diesel for a similar role?

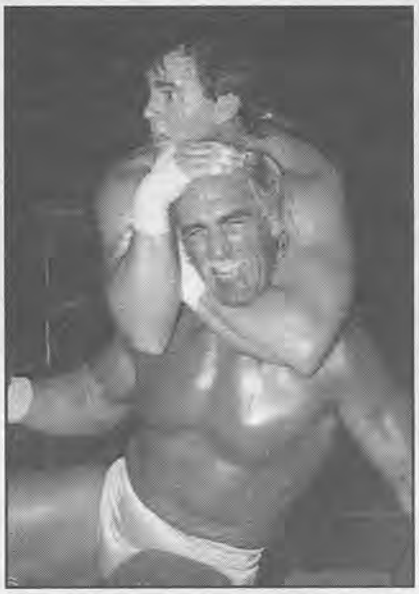
Brutus Beefcake ... Brutus "The Barber" Beefcake ... Brutus "The Butcher" Beefcake ... now it's just *Brutus* again. **Kevin Sullivan** and Brutus teamed up for a match against **Randy Savage** and **Hulk Hogan** in Orlando, Florida, recently, and Brutus wound up getting pinned. Sullivan and **Avalanche** angrily walked out on him, and it appears **Big Bubba Rogers** will soon be occupying the vacant space in the **Three Faces of Fear**.

"I can't believe how ungrateful Sullivan is," Brutus said. "I put the Faces of Fear on the map. If it wasn't for me, they wouldn't have the reputation they have. I don't need them, I don't need Hogan, I don't need anyone!"

Sgt. Craig Pittman is a new recruit in WCW. He has been talking tough about his plans for Hulk Hogan. For his sake, I'm glad the "Hulkster" doesn't get upset over that kind of thing anymore ... **Meng**, now a wrestler again, is



Shortly after Sid Vicious lost the USWA title to Jerry Lawler (above), he agreed to become Shawn Michaels' bodyguard. His main job will be to protect Michaels from Diesel, Shawn's *former* bodyguard (right).



Brutus Beefcake is a man without many friends these days. He turned against Hulk Hogan months ago, and now it appears he is on the outs with Kevin Sullivan and Avalanche, too.

champing at the bit for a shot at—who else?—Hogan.

Bam Bam Bigelow continues to say nasty things about former NFL great **Lawrence Taylor** and is still hoping to lure Taylor into the ring. The closest L.T. ever got to wrestling was as corner man for **Lex Luger** when Luger engaged in a football helmet match against **Mr. Hughes** in WCW a few years ago.

WWF World tag team champions **The Smokin' Gunns** have been put on notice by **Jim Cornette**. "I am warning those side-saddle sissies that I have put the most devastating tag team in history together. The world is not ready, but I have them. I'm talking about **Bruiser Bedlam** and **Mantaur**! They're so dangerous, they make **Jeffrey Dahmer** and **Charles Manson** look like saints!"

Speaking of Cornette, **Robert Gibson** and **Rick Morton** (**The Rock 'n' Roll Express**) are at odds about keeping him on as their manager. The debate became so heated that Gibson, who does not want to make the alliance with Cornette permanent, teamed with **Tracey Smothers** on several recent SMW cards. Morton accepted some singles matches with **Unibomb**, a huge 345-pound newcomer.

"Families argue," Gibson said. "This is nothing that will split Ricky and me forever. I'm just trying to make my point. Cornette did help us win the tag team belts, but I have a feeling he's doing some bad things behind our backs. I just don't trust him totally."

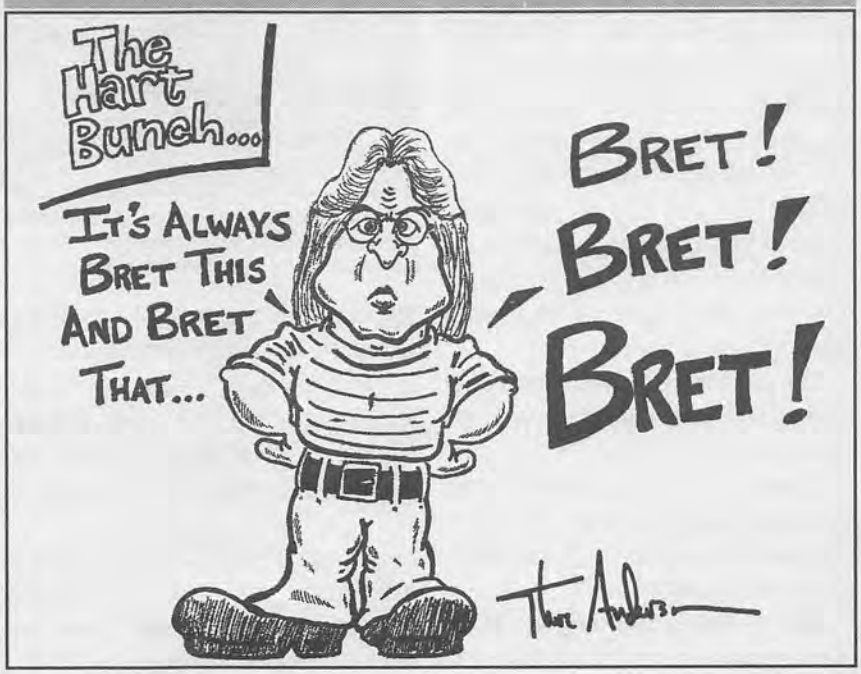
"I hope Robert changes his mind," Morton responded. "Cornette may be friends with men as nasty as **Yokozuna**, Bruiser Bedlam, and their kind, but he hasn't done wrong by us yet. We have to give him a chance."

Chainz, an independent star in Tennessee, called to tell me he's furious that he hasn't gotten any coverage in our magazines. "You write about Hogan, **Big Van Vader**, **The Undertaker**, and all those other bums, but I am ignored." Not anymore, Chainz ... Where have you gone, **Toni Adams**? ... Kudos to **Boo Bradley** for registering several non-title victories over NWA champion **Chris Candido**. One of those was in a "loser-must-eat-dog-food" bout! ... I came across a

(Continued on page 72)

Rick Morton (pictured against Mustafa Saed) and Robert Gibson got help from Jim Cornette in beating The Gangstas for the SMW tag team belts. Morton and Gibson have been arguing over whether to keep Cornette as their manager.

STEVE ANDERSON'S VIEW



NO HOLDS BARRED

with David Rosenbaum

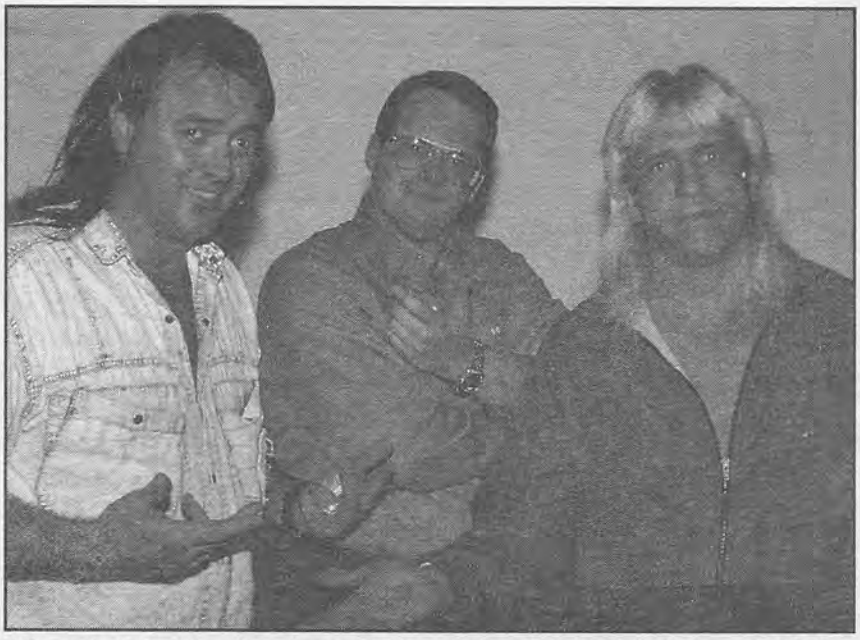
ONE ASPECT OF wrestling that often confuses fans and non-fans alike is how sworn enemies can suddenly become friends, or how best friends can suddenly become enemies ... all in the blink of an eye. How do you forgive a person who has stabbed you in the back, attacked you with metal chairs, tried to break your leg a dozen times, and basically called you every dirty name in the book?

At press time, Robert Gibson and Rick Morton were dealing with this problem. Jim Cornette, their longtime rival, wanted to become the permanent manager of the team he has hated for most of the past decade. Gibson and Morton have been arguing over whether to accept Cornette into the fold on a full-time basis. Morton says yes, Gibson says no way.

On another front, it looks like Brutus Beefcake might ask Hulk Hogan for forgiveness.

Watchers of the War of the Harts wonder how Owen and Bret will ever be able to sit down at the same dinner table again.

But wrestlers are not alone in wondering whether to forgive and forget before carrying out acts of forgiveness, or at least contriteness.



After a decade of feuding, Jim Cornette and The Rock 'n' Roll Express decided to make nice and join forces. Dave Rosenbaum wonders why so many wrestlers are so quick to forgive their enemies.

On February 14—Valentine's Day—and about one month into the People vs. O.J. Simpson case, yet another unusual story came out of the courtroom. Just prior to the beginning of the day's proceedings, members of Nicole Brown Simpson's family met with members of O.J. Simpson's family.

A battle royal didn't break out, nor did they call each other liars.

They hugged, kissed, and exchanged pleasantries. There were a few tears and plenty of kind words.

It looked like a nice scene.

Then I began wondering: How can they be so superficial?

Certainly the Brown family can't

(Continued on page 74)

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BLINDSIDED

BY ANDY RODRIGUEZ

WHEN USWA CHAMPION Jerry Lawler captured the Smoky Mountain heavyweight title, he did more than win a belt ... he revived the debate about his role in the sport.

In his hometown of Memphis, Tennessee, there is a small, hearty group of wrestling fans who absolutely despise Lawler. They call themselves "The Jerry Lawler Haters' Club." As you might guess, they don't have an easy time recruiting new members.

"Most of the fans here in Memphis think Lawler can do no wrong," said Sharon Wise, one of the club's founding members. "If you go to a match at the Mid-South [Coliseum] and dare say even one slightly bad thing about him, you better be prepared to take a lot of abuse, and worse. We have the guts to say how we really feel about the guy."

Over the past couple of years, club members have enjoyed getting together to watch Lawler's matches and commentary on WWF television. In the WWF, they say, "The King" receives the kind of treatment he deserves.

***Lawler:* kingly, not saintly**

"People in the WWF see Lawler for what he is: a liar and a thief!" said Rich White, a club member who refers to himself as a "reformed" Lawler fan. "For years he has sold a bill of goods to the folks in Memphis, about how he's some sort of dragonslayer. In the WWF, he's exposed for the phony he is."

Recently, members of the club found another reason to be joyful. When Lawler began competing in Smoky Mountain, he was treated by fans there the same way he is treated in the WWF.

Unfortunately for them, Lawler quickly captured the SMW heavyweight belt from Tony Anthony.

"That's bad news all right," the club's president, Jack Sisk, offered. "Now Lawler is really going to be even more unbearable than he usually is. But thank goodness he hasn't brainwashed the entire state. At least some of our fellow Tennesseans can see through to the real Jerry Lawler."

Nevertheless, most USWA fans in Memphis insist they do indeed know the "real" Lawler, and he is not the man his detractors depict him as.

"Sure, Jerry has his faults," admitted one loyalist. "So does every other wrestler. But over all, he has done a tremendous amount of good for the city of Memphis in general and the USWA in particular. Winning that Smoky Mountain belt is just another feather in his cap as far, as I'm concerned. Folks there—and some here—should at least respect Jerry. All he's doing is sticking up for his hometown."

So which is it? Is Lawler a thoroughly rotten fraud, or a misunderstood philanthropist? As usual, the truth is difficult to discern.

To Lawler's supporters: "The King" *has* battled some of the biggest and most hated men in the business, and he has defeated most of them. In the process, he has won well-deserved praise. Maybe he really is a "king."

He is also a conniver and a cheat and a slanderer. He is a character lacking in character. More of a clown prince than a monarch.

To Lawler's detractors: You are correct to condemn Lawler when he does something wrong. He has hurt a lot of good people in this sport. Maybe he really does deserve to be banned.

But he is also among the greatest wrestlers of his era. His scientific skills are lacking, but he possesses in abundance heart, courage, and guts. Those qualities have made him one of the best.

Lawler is not two-faced. He is not a chameleon, changing into whatever people in a particular area want—or don't want—to see. He displays all sides of himself everywhere he competes. The USWA champion is no different from the man who wears the Smoky Mountain belt.

Just try telling them that down in Memphis, Tennessee. □

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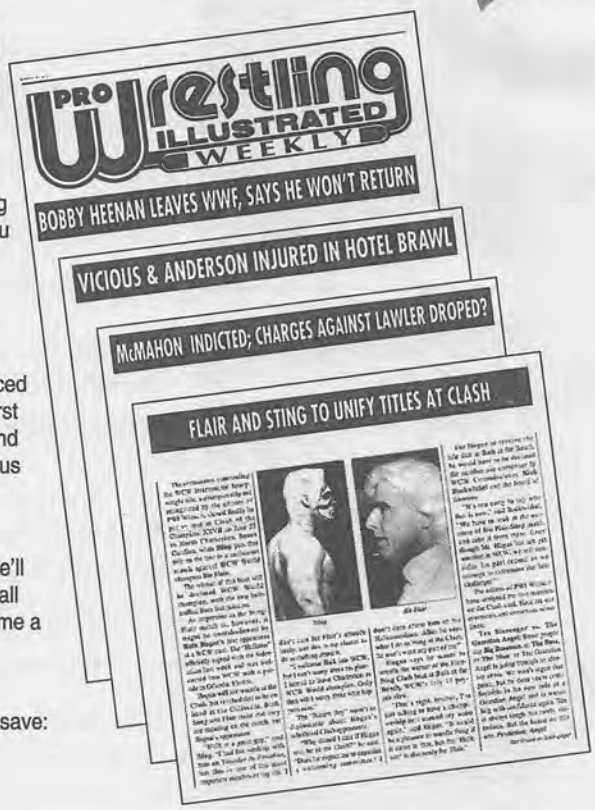

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Thumbs Up

Each Issue, *The Wrestler* will praise the noteworthy and damn those who violate the honor of wrestling. The praiseworthy receive a Thumbs Up, the disgraceful are marked with a Thumbs Down. Here is this month's roll of honor and shame.

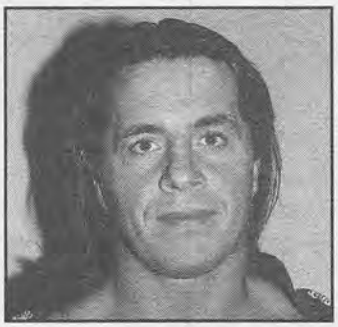
Thumbs Up to Randy Savage. So far, so good. We had our doubts at Starrcade when the "Macho Man" realigned with Hulk Hogan. The "Hulkster" has been the target of so many attacks that we figured Savage might have ambush on his mind. But Hogan and Savage have formed an outstanding tag team, and Savage has given his all in every one of their matches. Maybe he has matured, or maybe he just realized that being a fan favorite is good for his career. Whatever the reason, Savage and Hogan have been a dominant tag team. Wait a minute … maybe the WCW tag team picture isn't so dismal after all.

Thumbs Up to Jerry Lawler. A "Nay" for his performance in winning the Smoky Mountain heavyweight title in tainted fashion from Tony Anthony. A "Yay" for his honest effort in beating Brian Christopher and Bill Dundee in a 60-minute marathon match to earn a heavyweight title match with Sid Vicious, then beating Sid for the title. It annoys us when Lawler breaks the rules because we know he still has so much ability. Sid Vicious wouldn't have lasted so long as USWA champ had Lawler gotten a fair match sooner. It's nice to know that "The King" still acts like a king and plays by the rules sometimes.

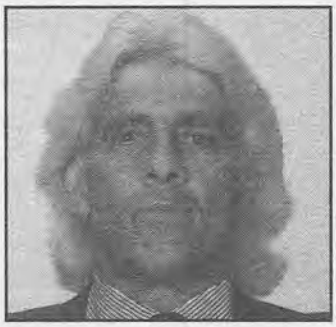
Thumbs Up to Davey Boy Smith. All eyes are on Shawn Michaels, but don't be surprised if the "British Bulldog" is battling for the WWF World title by this summer. Smith is on a roll. He has defeated former WWF World champion Bob Backlund in a series of matches, came up just short against Michaels in the Royal Rumble, and is wrestling better than ever against top-notch competition. Davey Boy has his sights set on the World title—he's a former Intercontinental and World tag team champion—and thinks he can beat anyone in the federation. We think he might be right.

Thumbs Up to Rick Martel. Although he hasn't been a "Model" citizen for a long time, Martel showed his good side when he saved Pierre from a beating by Shawn Michaels. First of all, why would Michaels waste his time with Pierre? Doesn't he have bigger fish to fry? And why does Michaels insist upon looking for trouble wherever he goes? The fans in Montreal were upset when Michaels attacked Pierre after he pinned him, and justifiably thrilled when Martel came to the rescue. Martel vs. Michaels doesn't strike our fancy as a Match of the Year candidate, but we wouldn't mind seeing somebody kick Michaels' butt!

Thumbs Down



Thumbs Down to Bret Hart. We didn't think the War of the Harts could possibly escalate, but that's what happened at the Royal Rumble. Blame it on Bret, who assaulted his brother Owen both before he made it to the Royal Rumble match and again after Owen was eliminated. We're not saying Bret's the reason this war has raged on and on. Owen started it, but Bret could always say he was merely defending himself against his brother's violent, heinous actions. Not anymore. "The Hitman" has made things much worse by keeping Owen in the "sharpshooter" long after he submitted in recent matches all over North America.



Thumbs Down to Ric Flair. The "Nature Boy" spent months feeding the misconception that he was happily retired and harbored no grudges against Hulk Hogan. Boy, were we wrong! Flair's decision to sit in the stands to watch the Hogan-Big Van Vader SuperBrawl V match caught us by surprise. "'Hulkamania' will die, Hogan, and I'll be there to watch it go down," Flair said. Too bad Flair couldn't do the job himself. His bitterness surprises us, considering his career achievements, and disappoints us, too. We're now betting that Flair will attempt a comeback. So much for going out with honor and grace.

Thumbs Down to Brutus Beefcake. Suddenly—but not at all to our surprise—the "Barber" turned "Butcher" is having second thoughts about turning against Hulk Hogan. Problems surfaced when Kevin Sullivan and Avalanche left the ring without Beefcake after Beefcake and Sullivan lost a tag team match to Hogan and "Macho Man" Randy Savage. Perhaps Beefcake is realizing the grass is greener on the other side of the fence. Now Beefcake wants to be called The Man With No Name. Maybe he should get together with the everchanging Big Bubba Rogers and get some serious career counseling.

Thumbs Down to Chris Candido. It's time for the NWA champion to put his title on the line against former partner Boo Bradley and other worthy contenders. In fact, it's time for Candido to stop appearing in non-title matches. What's the purpose? Candido and manager Tamara Murphy Fytch apparently don't have the guts to fight fair. Bradley has defeated Candido many times, including in a few ridiculous "loser-must-eat-dog-food" matches, but Candido refuses to put the belt on the line. Great champions realize that a title is meaningless unless it is defended regularly. So far, Candido is a meaningless champion.

CORRESPONDENTS REPORTS

Las Vegas, NV *(Correspondent—Harry Simon):* Last year, Sabu and Cactus Jack destroyed an innocent casino/arena during an anything-goes "desert death match" war in Las Vegas. For their NWC rematch, billed as "Desert Death Match II," the ring was encased with a cage and stocked with assorted foreign objects, including tables, a garbage can, a board, plexiglass, a noose, bottles, a bucket, and a shovel.

Every one of the weapons came into play, and blood flowed freely as Cactus and Sabu battered each other unmercifully from the moment the bell sounded.

During a key point of the match, Sabu missed a moonsault when Cactus moved away at the last instant. Cactus then smashed a bottle over a dazed Sabu's head. Finally, both men started to climb opposite sides of the cage. While Cactus was climbing down the outside of the cage, Sabu simply let himself fall from the top, crashing to the arena floor, but gaining the win. Splattered, but victorious—the story of Sabu's life.

In other bouts: Barbara Blayze wrestled Lady Victoria to a double-disqualification ... Johnny "Psycho" Paine defeated Wayne Young ... SWAT pinned KGB ... Bobby Bradley defeated The Thug by disqualification ... The Karate Kid & "Beautiful" Bobby Dean beat Little Tokyo & Lord Littlebrook in a midget tag team match ... Junkyard Dog pinned Larry Powers.

Cactus Jack and Sabu have gone at it in many intense ECW matches, but their steel cage match in Las Vegas may have been their most brutal match ever. Sabu won after dropping from the top of the cage.

Staten Island, NY *(Correspondent—Eddie D'Anna):* Body for Hire, recognized as "street fighting champion" by Universal Superstars of America, successfully defended his title in a torrid "Staten Island Street Match" against Handsome Johnny at Our Lady Star of the Sea Church.

In a street fight championship match, falls count anywhere in the building. There are basically no rules, which suited these contestants just fine.

Bodyguard started the match by pounding Handsome outside the ring. The two eventually fought through a whole section of chairs, leaving about 75 fans without seats. The Bodyguard cracked Handsome's head through a table, then piledrived him into a garbage can. Bodyguard was far from finished. He threw his opponent and a table into the ring. Handsome took advantage of this by pounding Bodyguard with the table. He put Bodyguard on top of it and went for a somersault off the top rope, but Bodyguard moved out of the way.

Then it was Bodyguard's turn to use the table as a weapon.

Handsome somehow fought back and went for another somersault from the top rope. Once

(Continued on page 76)

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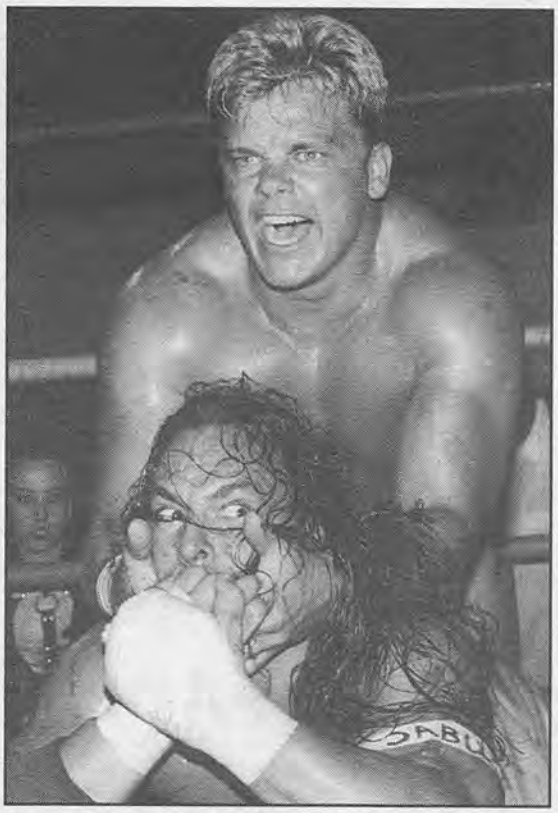
3034/10-94

You Asked Us

Here's the monthly feature that YOU get to write! It's your chance to have a top wrestler answer YOUR questions! Only the best questions will be answered, so put on your thinking caps and come up with some good ones! Address your questions—and who you would like to have answer them—to:

YOU ASKED US, c/o THE WRESTLER,
Box 1148, Ft. Washington, PA 19034.

Q: "I have a question for 'The Franchise,' Shane Douglas. Does it bother you that while you have held the heavyweight title of one of the most volatile federations in the world, ECW, for nearly a year, Sabu gets more attention and publicity than you?"—Chris Wilcox, Yardville, NJ



Shane Douglas isn't bothered that Sabu gets more publicity than him. He says he has beaten the wildman many times and knows he's the world's best wrestler.

A: **"No, Chris," said Douglas. "It doesn't bother me at all. I've beaten the man. I know what it takes to take Sabu to the limit. I've been there. I've seen fear in his eyes when he's come face-to-face with me, the greatest wrestler in the world. I know I'm a better wrestler than he is. Deep down in his heart—if he has a heart—I suspect that he knows it, too. They don't call Shane Douglas 'The Franchise' because it sounds good. They call me 'The Franchise' because I am the greatest wrestler ever to wrestle in ECW. If Sabu wants another piece of me and my title, he knows where to find me. I don't think he has the guts!"**

***

Q: "My question is for Arn Anderson: Your good friend Ric Flair is supposedly retired, but if he ever decided to return as a manager to re-form The Four Horsemen, would you leave Col. Rob Parker's Stud Stable to become part of Flair's New Four Horsemen?"—Eric Thornton, Kent, WA

Arn Anderson says the days of The Four Horsemen are over. He is happy to be a member of Col. Robert Parker's Stud Stable, which he calls the most powerful wrestling group in the world.

A: **"Interesting question," Anderson said with a laugh. "I don't expect that to happen. The Stud Stable is, by far, the most powerful wrestling group in the world right now. No other stable is even close. With Col. Parker by my side, I won the WCW TV title, and I might not stop until I get my hands on the World or U.S. titles ... or both. Ric Flair is one of the toughest, most talented men I've ever met, but I think the days of The Four Horsemen are in the past. I don't focus on the past. The Stud Stable is the future of wrestling. Me, Col. Parker, Meng, Blacktop Bully, Bunkhouse Buck, Dick Slater, ... we're unstoppable."**

***

Q: "I have a question for Al Snow: I have followed your career for years. I see that you are now wrestling in Midwest Territorial Wrestling, ECW, Smoky Mountain, Japan, and other indepen-

(Continued on page 78)

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2) Capt. Lou Albano
3) Fred Blassie
4) Bobby Heenan

True or False: Rick Steamboat once briefly held the AWA World title.
1) True
2) False

Which of the following wrestlers has never held the WCW television title (as of December 31, 1994)?
1) Sting
2) Steve Austin
3) Rick Steiner
4) Scott Steiner

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3234/12-94

INTRODUCING MANTAUR

Many conquerors of the new world have come from the Mediterranean area. Now from the island of Crete comes a wrestler who intends to conquer the WWF's "New Generation"

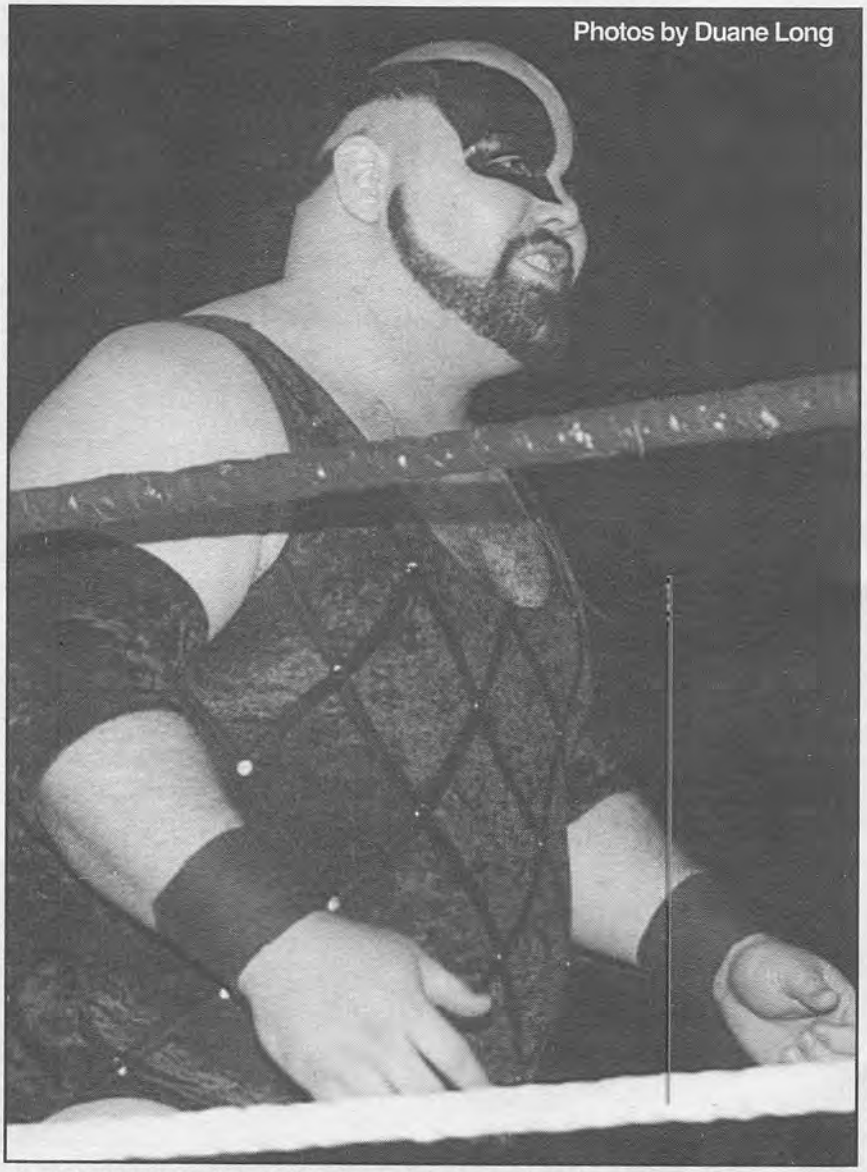
By Brandi Mankiewicz

ONCE UPON A time, during the 1960s, there was a loud-mouthed, obnoxious wrestling manager named "Wild" Red Berry. He managed one of the fiercest, most feared rulebreakers of the time, Gorilla Monsoon. The same Gorilla Monsoon who currently does blow-by-blow on *WWF Wrestling Challenge* every week.

A wrestler possessing superhuman strength. A manager with a mouth that runs a mile a minute. They were destined to wreak havoc upon the WWF. And they did ... for years.

Now it's 1995, and a new conqueror, Mantaur, has come to the WWF from the Mediterranean, this time from the tiny island of Crete. He, too, is a man with superior strength, a lot of raw ability ... and a manager who never quite knows when or how to shut up.

"I am the manager of the fiercest wrestler in the WWF today," exclaimed Jim Cornette, sounding very reminiscent of another vociferous manager from decades ago. "Mantaur possesses the greatest raw abilities of any wrestler in the WWF. He will take on every one of these weaklings and beat them. Bring on the real competition! Bring on Diesel! Bring on Bret Hart! Bring on Lex Luger! They won't know how to deal with Mantaur!"


Photos by Duane Long

The 401-pound Mantaur is Jim Cornette's latest find. A native of Crete, Mantaur doesn't try to outwrestle his opponents; he looks to overpower anyone who gets in his way.

Mantaur stands 6'1" and weighs 401 pounds (remember Gorilla Monsoon's fighting weight?) and is one of the most impressive and intimidating athletes to enter the WWF in quite some time. Mantaur's abilities have already gained him favorable recognition from a lot of experts, some of whom liken his wrestling style to that of the legendary Monsoon.

Cornette disagreed with that assessment.

"Mantaur wrestles like no other has before him, especially not like some big overrated baboon who's a lousy broadcaster and was an even worse wrestler," he said. "Mantaur demolishes everything in his path. He won't try to outwrestle you, he just runs over people. Bodyslams, powerslams, splashes ... he's a strong as an ox. As soon as I saw him wrestle in person, I knew I had to get him under contract before someone else did."

The Kid didn't stand much of a chance when Mantaur got his huge hands on him during a recent battle royal. Lighter WWF fan favorites figure to have big problems with this awesome man in months to come.

Cornette discovered Mantaur wrestling on an independent card about a year ago. He learned from the promoter of that card that Mantaur emigrated from Crete. The promoter told Cornette that in his native country, Mantaur, who sometimes wears a large horse head to the ring, defeated every man that dared to challenge him. When there was no one left to beat, he came to America to face the toughest competition he could find.

Before he could get the attention he wanted from an organization like the WWF, though, he had to prove himself in independent rings all around the country.

Mantaur had little trouble annihilating all his opponents in those matches, too; Cornette was impressed.

"The first time I saw him wrestle, I knew that he had the natural talent that I could really build upon," said Cornette. "I knew that I found my next big superstar. With a genius like me on his side, he can't fail!"

Mantaur may have natural ability, size, and strength, but he lacks the formal wrestling training that so many wrestlers possess today. That doesn't discourage Cornette, who says Mantaur wrestles with the fury of a caged animal is already better than all the fan favorites in the WWF.

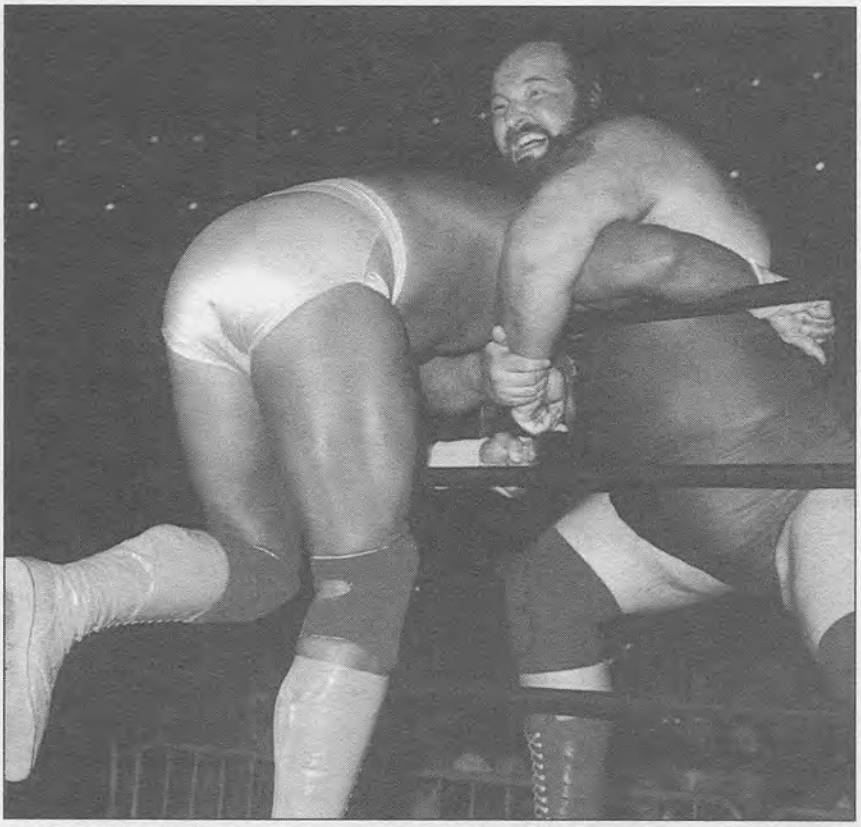
"With Mantaur's ability and my expert trainers and managerial mind, he will be a world champion soon!" boasted Cornette.

That's quite a statement from a man who has managed many champions throughout his career. Cornette's biggest triumph in the WWF to date was helping Yokozuna hold on to the WWF World title for nearly a year. He said he wouldn't rule out putting Mantaur and Yokozuna together in a tag team. That might be 969 pounds of unequivocal trouble that The Smokin' Gunns couldn't handle.

A team like that might even impress Monsoon. □

Q&A

Each month, *The Wrestler* will present a "Question and Answer" forum with an important figure in the wrestling world. It is your chance to meet wrestling's biggest stars as they answer the questions uppermost in fans' minds



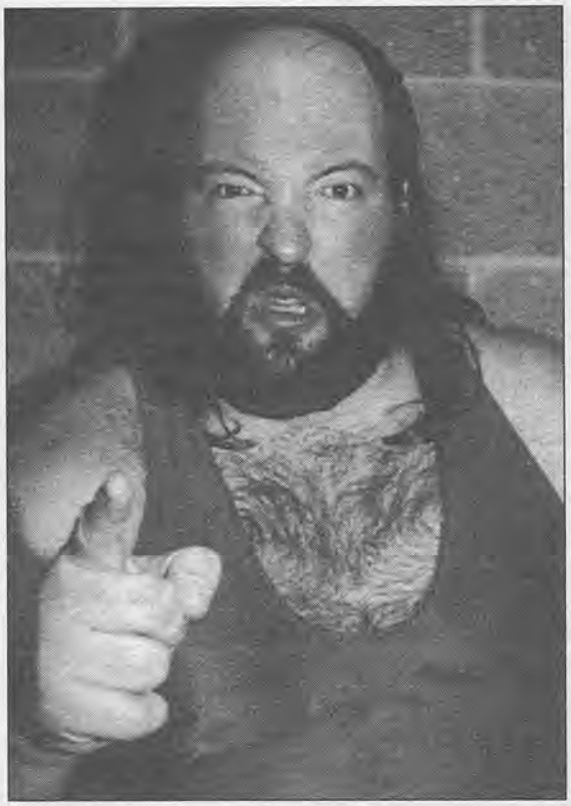
So far, Avalanche has only gotten his hands on Hulk Hogan in tag team action in WCW. He says he hasn't gotten at shot at the "Hulkster's" title because Hogan fears him. He intends to hound the WCW World champ until he gets that shot.

Q: Are you a basketball fan, Avalanche?

A: What if I am?

Q: Well, I notice that the same day WCW's in town here, the Orlando Magic's hosting the New York Knicks. Shaquille O'Neal vs. Patrick Ewing. Do you ever compare yourself with big men in other sports?

A: I have a lot of respect for those guys. They're the best at what they do, and they prove it night after night. But I don't waste my time comparing myself with people in other sports, not even people who dominate like they do. They have their business, and I have mine. I have to stay focused on pro wrestling and nothing else. You ask anyone who's ever stepped through the ropes to face me, and they'll tell you that focus has paid off.



AVALANCHE

ONE DAY, TWO WCW wrestlers were talking about a fellow grappler who had just started competing in their federation. One mentioned the wrestler's name change and wondered whether it would affect the way he wrestled.

"Put it this way," said the other. "Would you rather be trapped in an earthquake, or caught in an avalanche?"

Avalanche doesn't leave anyone much of a choice. The 503-pound behemoth is one of the biggest, strongest, and meanest competitors in the sport, and on top of it all, he's a solid technical grappler. Schooled in sumo wrestling, Avalanche (formerly Earthquake) brings to the ring a blend of skills that makes him a threat to any man and any title.

No surprise, then, that since arriving in WCW in October, Avalanche has made a major impact. As one of the Three Faces of Fear, he appears regularly in Hulk Hogan's nightmares. To Sting, he is a constant threat. More recently, he has been teaming with Big Bubba Rogers. They formed a duo with the potential to dominate the tag team scene.

Senior Writer Andy Rodriguez recently journeyed to Orlando, Florida, to conduct an interview with Avalanche.

Besides, isn't O'Neal the one who goes around calling himself a "Hulkamaniac"?

Q: He has made a couple of appearances with Hogan.

A: He shouldn't waste his time. Hogan is the biggest phony in the history of our sport!

Q: He's also the WCW World champion.

A: A fact I *will* change very soon!

Q: How soon? You aren't getting any title shots at Hogan.

A: But I will. It's inevitable. Nobody can ignore what I've done to Hogan in the past. I exposed him, drove him out of the sport for a long time. That's a fact, too. The problem is that he doesn't want to wrestle me. Hogan always gets what he wants. I have to deal with it, just like everybody else. I'll deal with it, and Hogan will have to deal with me eventually!

Q: Hogan already deals with you. You're one of the Three Faces of Fear.

A: So far it's the only way I can get my hands on Hogan, and for now it'll have to do. Hogan's never been afraid of people like he's been afraid of Kevin Sullivan and me.

Q: Why did you hook up with Sullivan?

A: It's simple—he hates Hogan. That was good enough for me. Kevin's a good guy to have around in any event. They can talk all they want about The Four Horsemen, but the Three Faces of Fear, no matter who the third member ends up being, blows them away! I don't need anybody in my corner, but I like being with these guys. We've proved to Hogan and Randy Savage and Sting and that idiot Dave Sullivan that we're the absolute best in WCW!

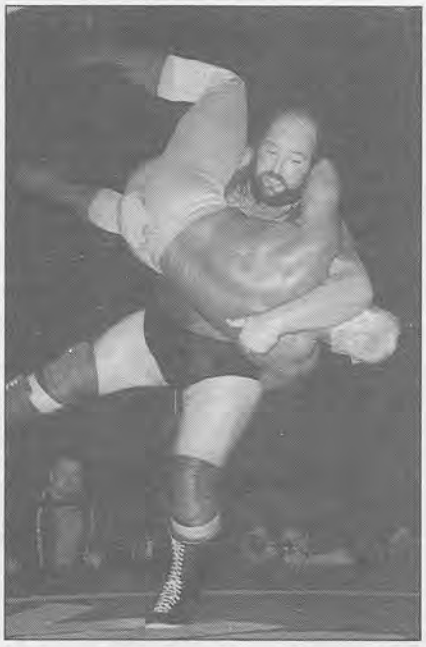
Q: At the most recent Clash, Hogan and Savage beat Sullivan and Beefcake.

A: Okay, so we got ripped off! It isn't just about wins and losses. Hogan knows we're always waiting for him. So does Savage, but who cares about him? Right now Hogan's just getting a little taste of him, but he'll soon get a whole mouthful, and I guarantee he'll gag on it! Savage will turn against him, I guarantee it!

Q: You're anxious to pursue Hogan, but you appear to have quite a good thing going with Big Bubba Rogers.

A: Bubba's a good guy and a good partner. We could do a lot of damage together, but I don't want to take things too

Avalanche says he is through pounding on Sting (above and right). For the record, he says didn't submit in their Clash of Champions match in January and advises Sting to stop being Hogan's lackey.



far yet. But when you think about it, it is pretty amazing. One minute Bubba's the referee in a match between me and Sting, and the next minute we're partners.

Q: You mean the two of you had no contact prior to the Clash?

A: Yeah, our paths crossed a few times a while back, but I was just as surprised at what happened as anybody. It makes sense, though. Bubba was getting screwed around by WCW. I mean, they wouldn't even let him be the ref! He was just doing his job when Nick Patrick jumped in the ring and said I submitted. No way did I ever submit, and Bubba knew that. He was calling it as he saw it. After that, Bubba had every right to be ticked off! I said to him that night, "Hey, what took you so long to come to your senses?"

Q: So you didn't know what he had planned?

A: I don't think he knew what he had planned. It just happened that way. As The Guardian Angel, Bubba was just a big simp. Nobody took him seriously. Now he's got everybody's respect. I expect him to kick some major butt.

Q: You said you're taking things slow as far as your teaming with him, but he says one of his main goals is the WCW World tag team title.

A: So what. I don't have control over what he says. I never said I wouldn't like a shot at the tag belts. We'd be terrific champions, probably the best WCW's ever had. But Bubba's smart enough to know that when I say I'll go after something, I'll do it, and to hell with the team! Same thing with the Faces of Fear. I do what suits me at the moment. I don't take orders from anybody!

Q: Jimmy Hart managed you in the WWF. Do you have any contact with him now?

A: I can't believe you asked me that question, you idiot! Jimmy Hart is a tragic waste! Back when he *advised* me, the guy had a lot of good ideas. He wasn't afraid to step on any toes. But as soon

as things started to go bad for him, he panicked. He got scared. He thought that to save himself, he had to hook up with somebody like Hogan. Well, maybe he's got a few more dollars in his pocket now, but in my mind, Jimmy Hart is pathetic. I wonder what he'll do with his life after I tear down the Hogan legend for good.

Q: Is Hogan your only challenge? What about Sting?

A: I'm through with Sting. There isn't anything left to prove by pounding him. He was a decent opponent when I first came to WCW. I'm not saying he's not a great wrestler, because he is. Any man who's ever held the WCW World title is one of the best. But I'm done with him.

Q: Don't you want to avenge your loss at the Clash?

A: What loss? I don't count that match. I didn't submit! I was the victim of Nick Bockwinkel's plot to make Bubba look bad. I'm finished with Sting, and he better not come chasing me down! If he does, he'll get hurt! Sting should wise up and do what Bubba did. He's not going to get back to the top by being a friend of Hogan's. Hogan double-crosses his friends. Just ask "The Butcher."

Q: You guys apparently had had a falling-out with "The Butcher." I saw where you and Sullivan walked out on him after Sullivan and him lost a match to Hogan and Savage here in Orlando. How can you be sure you can trust your stablemates? You have to admit you all have checkered pasts when it comes to trust.

A: *(angrily)* **That's flat-out nonsense. If you can't trust someone, you get rid of them. If you've been around long enough, you can see it coming.**

Q: Would you prefer they didn't interfere?

A: Actually, I'd prefer it if they didn't interfere. The problem comes when people like Randy Savage start butting in. When that happens, other people have no choice but to get involved. We could solve all that if Hogan would agree to a cage match with me, but I don't expect him to go for that, because he's a natural-born coward! He's only a tough guy on that TV show of his.

Q: If you were to win the World title, what would happen to the Three Faces of Fear? Would you abandon Sullivan?

A: Unlike Hogan, I treat my friends with respect. I wouldn't just walk out on them. On the other hand, I never saw the Faces as anything more than a temporary alliance. After all, our goal is to get Hogan, and how long will that take? When the Faces break up, I won't be shedding any tears, and neither will they. It's the same thing with Bubba. Right now we're solid, but when it's time for it to end, we'll realize it and move on.

Q: Even if you don't win the tag belts first?

A: Right, but the teams here in WCW shouldn't take any comfort in that. You don't ignore a team like Bubba and me. As long as we're tagging, we're dangerous. And as long as I'm in WCW, I will rule! □

Avalanche has formed a tag team with Big Bubba Rogers. This awesome duo will undoubtedly wreak havoc on the tag team scene of the WCW and could soon seek shots at the WCW World tag team titles.

THE WRESTLER PANEL EXAMINES

RAY

RANDY SAVAGE

Each month THE WRESTLER'S panel of experts will offer their candid opinions of one of wrestling's stars. Whether an up-and-coming youngster or an established superstar in his own right, our panel will always be frank and honest without fear of reprisal

Randy Savage won two World titles and conquered big men such as Yokozuna during his tenure in the WWF. It remains to be seen if he has what it takes to win the WCW World title.

CAPT. LOU ALBANO
"You gotta like the 'Macho Man.' I don't know if I've ever seen anyone as intense as him. He's not the kind of guy who can turn it up an extra notch late in a match, because he always goes at full-speed! He isn't the most talented wrestler in the world, but he has guts, determination, and charisma. Maybe his best days are behind him, but he still has good matches ahead of him. He's exciting to watch; the Captain could see him winning a third world title."

Capt. Lou Albano has led 13 tag teams—most recently The Headshrinkers—to a record 17 WWF World tag team titles.

KILLER KOWALSKI
"He wasted so many years of his career working as an announcer. Those were years he should have been winning titles. Look at Hogan and Flair. They both won world titles when they were well past their primes. Very few wrestlers take time off like Savage did and then come back to wrestle as well as they did in the past. It's a shame because Savage has so much talent and doesn't fear anyone. Now he's wasting time being Hogan's buddy. That's a *real* shame."

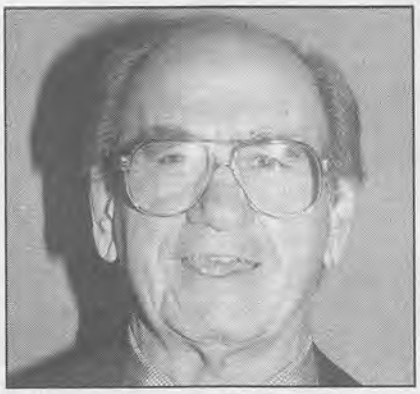
Killer Kowalski, one of the most sadistic rulebreakers in the sport's history, runs a wrestling school in Reading, Massachusetts.

DORY FUNK JR.
"Maybe I'm in the minority, but I feel Randy Savage is wrestling about as well now as he did during his two WWF World title reigns. I also think all the time he spent at the broadcast table helped him get some rest and let all the old injuries he had get healed. And he'd be better off staying a fan favorite than returning to rulebreaking, too. You can feel the energy of a crowd when he enters an arena as a fan favorite. I bet he'd beat Hogan if he got a chance."

Dory Funk Jr. held the NWA World championship from 1969 to 1973. He still wrestles from time to time, mostly in Japan.

FABULOUS MOOLAH
"I think Randy Savage is a wonderful wrestler, darlin'. I liked him better as a rulebreaker, but even as a fan favorite, he does pretty much what he wants. I like a man who takes charge. What worries me about him is that temper. When he was married to Elizabeth, he was always paranoid that someone was trying to steal her. He gets drawn into feuds too easily and makes silly mistakes because he gets too emotional in the ring. He has to control that hot temper."

Fabulous Moolah, the finest woman wrestler in history, held the World title for 28 years. She trains wrestlers in Columbia, South Carolina.

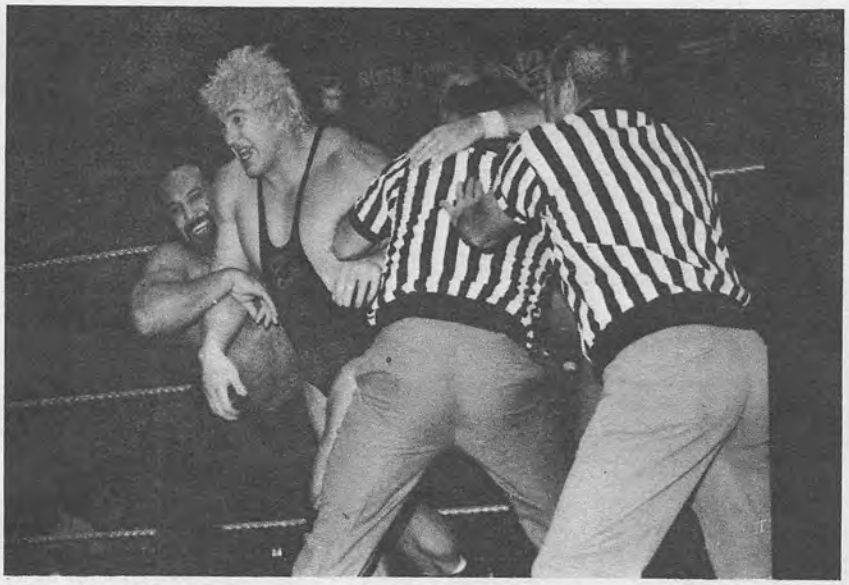


LOU THESZ
"Judging from his record, I have to put Savage in a category with a lot of the all-time greats. He won two WWF World titles and became a top contender to the WCW World title as soon as he entered WCW. But I'll say about Savage what I say about too many of today's superstars: He doesn't seem to work hard enough on getting better or changing his attack. That flying elbowsmash is great, but most opponents are ready for it now. Maybe he could work on a submission hold."

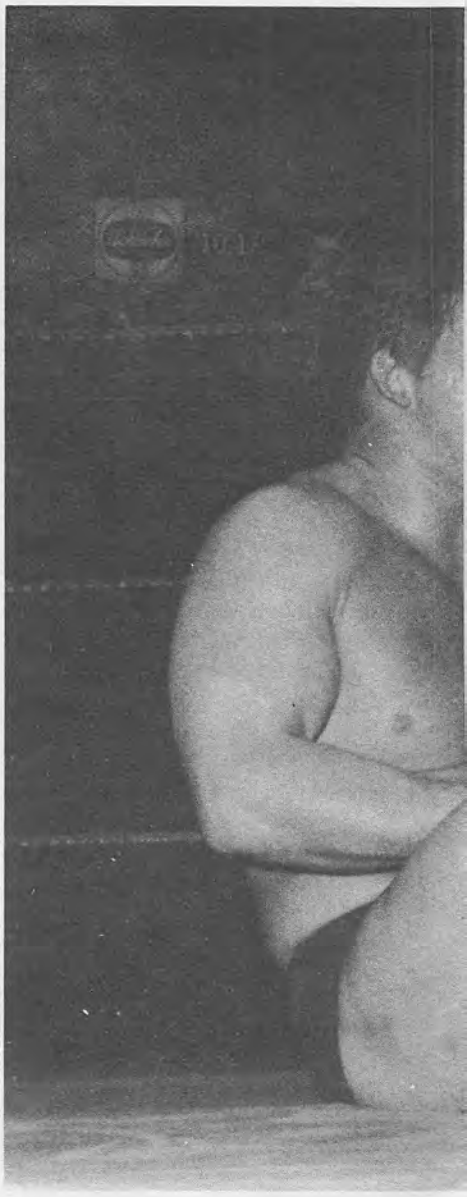
Lou Thesz held the NWA World title six times during his magnificent 50-year career. Many consider him the greatest all-around wrestler ever.

GORDON SOLIE
"Perhaps I will be proven wrong, but I predict that this wonderful Hulk Hogan-Randy Savage alliance will last. I know about their past problems, but the Savage I have seen in WCW seems to me to be a very mature person. He still does all he can to win a match, but he doesn't seem obsessed with having the spotlight shine on him like he used to in the past. Yes, I think he could beat Hulk Hogan. I'd like to see them in a fan favorite vs. fan favorite match."

Gordon Solie has expertly analyzed pro wrestling on television for more than 35 years. He periodically appears on WCW broadcasts.



After Ken Patera's championship match against Bob Backlund at Madison Square Garden, a free-for-all occurred. It took five wrestlers to hold Patera off (above). By contrast, the match was relatively calm. Backlund stretches Patera's arm (right).



KEN PATERA: "IF THE FANS KNEW THE TRUTH, THEY WOULD HATE

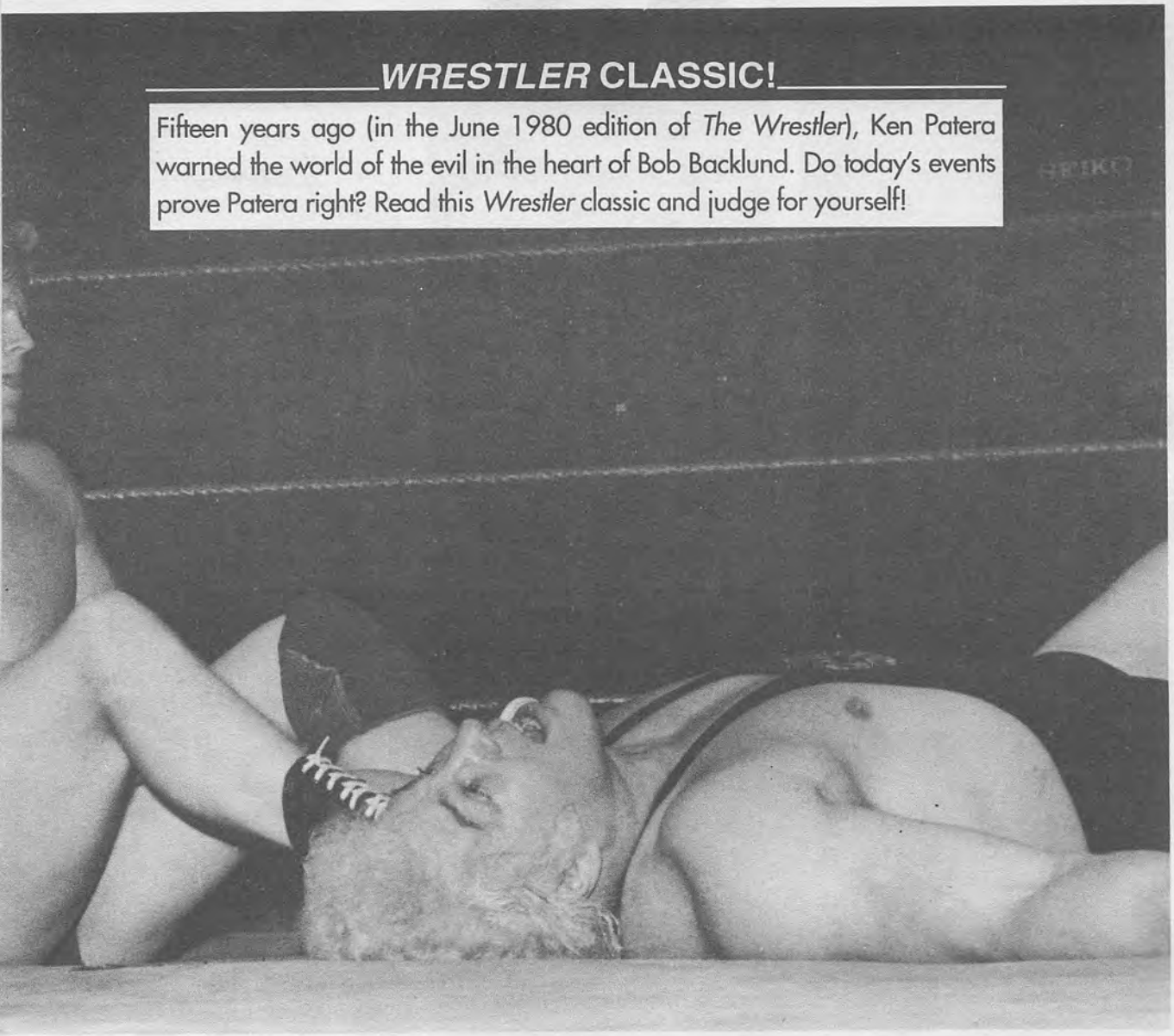
At great personal risk, Ken Patera set out to prove sordid charges against WWF champion Bob Backlund. No danger nor expense could dissuade Patera from his chosen course. Armed with shocking proof, Patera claims Backlund is not what he claims to be

KEN PATERA DROPPED his large feet atop the polished wood desk producing a disquieting thud. What passes for a half-smile traveled swiftly across Patera's brutally handsome face. A deep laugh, haughty and ominous, rumbles from the muscular neck. Another chuckle, humorless, a thin smile and Patera is ready.

"If the fans knew the truth, they would hate Bob Backlund," said Patera, clasping his hands

WRESTLER CLASSIC!

Fifteen years ago (in the June 1980 edition of *The Wrestler*), Ken Patera warned the world of the evil in the heart of Bob Backlund. Do today's events prove Patera right? Read this *Wrestler* classic and judge for yourself!



BOB BACKLUND!"

behind his neck and reclining in the chair. "It's up to me to bring the truth to the whole world so they can make a real decision about that bum."

Patera paused, gaze sweeping the paneled office of manager Grand Wizard.

"I've spent months compiling and documenting all this evidence," continued Patera. "My whole life was in constant danger from Backlund's henchmen. Let me tell you one or two incidents which demonstrate the risks I put myself in simply to get the truth out of the wrestling world.

"One night after the matches, I decided to follow Backlund. He must've known someone was following him because he took several cabs, a bus and then leaped into a black limo.

"Despite Backlund's fear, I kept behind him, watching his every slimy move. Finally, Backlund stopped in front of this tenement. A lot of the windows were broken. I saw a few rats scurrying around, and I knew this was the kinda place Backlund felt most at home.

"I waited until Backlund entered the building before slipping out of the shadows. He was alone. I knew that wouldn't last long. I was right. Two burly beefeaters moved in front of the entrance, lounging. I knew why they were there. Backlund's protection. His bodyguards.

Backlund brings Patera crashing to the canvas with a suplex (above left). Patera tries to break Backlund's side headlock (above right). After holding Backlund in a bearhug for over a minute, Patera lowers the champion to the mat, and the referee tries to determine if he is still conscious (below). Patera claims that a coalition of fan favorites is trying to run him and his fellow rulebreakers out of the sport.

"I looked up the slum, hoping Backlund was as stupid as he looked. I was right. A light flickered in the window on the third-floor. A couple of figures passed in front. That was where the meeting was being held.

"How to get up there? All these buildings have back entrances. I decided to take the chance. My mission, my purpose was great: expose Backlund for the liar and bum he really is. I drifted through the dark shadows, over broken bottles, splintered concrete, week-old bags of garbage. Some rats ran over my feet, nearly giving me a heart attack. I continued. Wrestling fans all over the world would thank me.

"I saw a door. The entrance was lightless, but it led up through the building. I had to get proof. I stumbled forward, groping up the steps until I reached the third floor. The hallway was lit by a dim bulb. Silence surrounded me. Except for one door and those muted voices. I listened, quietly stepping down the hall.

"A familiar, squeaky voice slithered onto the corridor. It was a rat. A rat named Bob Backlund. I stopped, halted my breathing and pulsating nerves. Backlund said something. Someone answered. That voice was also familiar. It had a heavy accent. It was Bruno Sammartino.

"I inched down the hall, careful not to crush the broken wine bottles. Another voice barked. Another heavy accent. Ivan Putski. I froze. What horrible conspiracy were these three evil men spinning. One more voice rushed forward. Breathless, frenzied, familiar. I couldn't believe who that voice belonged to: Pat Patterson!

"By now, I was on the edge of the doorway. I looked in and saw money changing hands. I saw my picture, Hulk Hogan's picture, Blassie, Albano, the Wiz. They had formed a hit squad to get rid of all of us. They had a huge sum of money right on that table. I heard Bruno say, 'You know, I want them wiped out. I don't care what the cost. I want them all gone!'

"I couldn't hold back any longer. I stood in the doorway, determined to tell them off. I shouted, "It'll take more than goons to get rid of us.' And then I took off at the speed of light. I care about fair fights. One on one, even two at a time, I'm not afraid. But I won't fight five or six at once. No sir.

"I raced down the back entrance, their frightened cries fading as I cut through the alley, down the street, and disappeared into the subway. I wanted the whole world to know what had happened.

"Next time fans cheer for Bob Backlund, let them remember the kind of guy he is. And let them know he won't be champ much longer," Patera concluded. □

WHEN CAPT. LOU ALBANO TALKS,

PEOPLE LISTEN!

"I've been around the sport of professional wrestling for 40 years, and I've read every story in the world's best wrestling magazines—**PRO WRESTLING ILLUSTRATED, THE WRESTLER, INSIDE WRESTLING, SPORTS REVIEW WRESTLING, WRESTLING SUPERSTARS, AND WRESTLING 91.**

"As 'Captain' of the **WRESTLING CLASSICS** magazine, it is my privilege to gather the very best stories every printed in those great magazines and fit them into one very special publication. **WRESTLING CLASSICS** is a must-read for fans who want to know a little bit more about this sport than just who won yesterday's match!"

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☐ **Nov. 1989:** Exclusive Photos Of A Lifetime! Hulk Hogan—From The Cradle To The Throne. Plus: Rhodes (1982), Flair (1980), Snuka (1981), Sullivan (1973), Rich-Sawyer (1984), Lord Al Hays (1973). Classic Ratings (1979). Future Classics: Savage, Steamboat.

☐ **Jan. 1990:** Roddy Piper's Title Match With Ric Flair Ends In Chaos! (1983). Plus: Sammartino (1977), Von Raschke (1972), Zbyszko (1981), Rhodes (1977), Andre-Ladd (1977), Hogan-Blackwell (1982), Kevin Von Erich (1984). Classic Ratings (1975). Future Classics: Sting, Warrior-Rude.

☐ **March 1990:** The Most Vicious Wrestlers Of Our Time: Terry Funk (1976), Kowalski (1972), Sheik (1974), Brody (1983), Hogan (1980), Blassie (1982), Steele (1973), Abdullah (1982), Hansen (1978). Classic Ratings (1980). Future Classics: AWA Team Series, Valentine-Garvin.

☐ **April 1990:** A Decade Of Feuds: Bruno-Zbyszko (1980), Andre-Khan (1981), Backlund-Snuka (1982), Piper-Valentine (1984), Slaughter-Sheik (1984), Flair-Nikita (1985), Hogan-Orndorff (1986). Classic Ratings (1980). Future Classics: Duggan, Luger.

☐ **May 1990:** Shockers! The World Title Upsets That Changed History: Rich-Race (1981), Koloff-Sammartino (1971), Graham-Sammartino (1977), Andre-Hogan (1988), Thesz-Rogers (1973), Stasiak-Morales (1974), Funk-Brisco (1976). Classic Ratings (1972). Future Classics: Andre & Haku, Zenk.

☐ **July 1990:** WrestleMania! The Grandeur & The Glory: An In-Depth Look At WrestleManias I-V. Classic WrestleMania VI Foldout: Hogan-Ultimate Warrior. Classic Ratings (1985). Future Classics: Skyscrapers-Road Warriors, Lawler-JYD.

☐ **Sept. 1990:** Capt. Lou Albano Picks . . . The Ugliest Wrestlers Ever! Firpo (1972), Bundy (1984), Mayne (1973), Curry (1965), Steele (1978), Abdullah (1976), Rhodes (1982), Kabuki (1982), Missing Link (1985). Classic Ratings: (1982). Future Classics: Orndorff, Orient Express.

☐ **Nov. 1990:** The Legion Of Doom—They Dine On Danger And Snack On Death: Six stories tracing The Road Warriors' brilliant career. Bonus: The Greatest Tag Teams In History. Classic Ratings: (1983). Future Classics: Savage-Elizabeth, Kevin Von Erich.

☐ **Jan. 1991:** Wrestling Reaches New Heights: A Special Tribute To The Sport's Giants: Andre (1974), Baba (1970), Studd (1983), Vicious (1989), Ladd (1976), Hogan (1983), Convict (1970), Andre-Jonathan (1972). Classic Ratings: (1973). Future Classics: Sting, Kerry Von Erich.

☐ **March 1991:** Tag Team Of World Champions! The Ultimate Warrior & Sting: Can It Happen Again? Plus: Valentine (1972), Flair (1977), Martel (1985), Slaughter (1989), Tolos (1973), Atlas (1981), Sammartino (1979). Classic Ratings: (1976). Future Classics: Pillman, Bossman.

☐ **May 1991:** Sgt. Slaughter—The Rise And Fall Of An American Hero. Four stories tracing his controversial career. Plus: Mixed Matches (1971), Hansen-Idol (1984), Thesz (1973), Igor-Hogan (1981), Rivera (1973). Classic Ratings: (1986). Future Classics: Nasty Boys, Vicious.

☐ **July 1991:** The Pretty Killer: Don't Be Misled By Their Looks! Stanlee (1965), Lewin (1963), Von Erichs (1986), Steamboat-Bockwinkel (1979), Martel (1984), Pillman (1990), Bravo (1975). Classic Ratings: (1972). Future Classics: Ultimate Warrior, Scott Putski.

☐ **Sept. 1991:** Wrestling's Greats! (Before They Were Great). Andre (1971), DiBiase (1980), Hennig (1988), Jarrett (1988), Freebirds (1981), Hansen (1976), Flair (1976), Hogan (1981), Justice (1988), Windham (1981), Zbyszko (1974). Classic Ratings: (1981). Future Classics: Flair, Mountie-Bossman.

☐ **Nov. 1991:** 20 Years (Or Better!)—And Still Going Strong! Lawler (1976), Terry Funk (1975), Ivan Koloff (1974), Slater (1975), Colon (1984), Mascaras (1977), Race (1975), Ron Garvin (1988), Snuka (1978), Valentine (1982), Murdoch (1981). Classic Ratings: (1984). Future Classics: Gigante, Warlord.

☐ **Jan. 1992:** Ric Flair vs. Hulk Hogan: History's Role In The History-Making Bout. Seven stories that explain why this is "The Fight Of The Century." Plus: Luger-Race (1985), Battle Royals, Silento Rodriguez (1969). Classic Ratings: (1987). Future Classics: Flair, Hogan.

☐ **March 1992:** The Bodies Beautiful: Wrestling's Sculpted Superstars. Atlas (1985), Hawk (1987), Kerry Von Erich & Billy Jack (1984), Vicious (1989), Graham (1977), Luger (1986), Hogan & Patera (1983), Rude & Orndorff (1988), Marino (1974), Thomas (1972). Classic Ratings: (1972). Future Classics: Rockers, Embry-Prichard.

☐ **Spring 1992:** Wrestling's Fabulous Females: Gorgeous But Deadly. Baby Doll (1988), Vachon (1972), Simmes (1987), Sunshine (1987), Madusa-Hyatt (1988), Laverne (1972), Elizabeth (1989), Dark Journey-Hyatt (1987), Casey (1972), Grable (1973), Woman (1990). Classic Ratings: (1975).

☐ **Summer 1992:** Macho Madness! Seven stories tracing the exciting and controversial career of Randy Savage. Plus: L.A. Battle Royal (1970), Heenan-Hays (1980), Albano & Altimore (1974), Blood Money (1985). Classic Ratings: (1988).

In case of a sellout, please indicate substitute choice:_____

THE WRESTLING BOOK OF LISTS

IF YOU'RE GOING to compile a few lists, the general thinking goes, you have to have a home office, like Sioux City, Iowa, or Albuquerque, New Mexico. The other rule of lists is that you have to have 10 things on them, so that it's a Top 10 list. Finally, lists have to be funny, right? Otherwise, what good are they?

Well, our home office is in Ambler, Pennsylvania, but we have "branch offices" in wrestling arenas throughout the United States.

We don't quite understand why there must be 10 things on a list. What if the list is Top 10 Great Lakes?

And why does a list always have to be funny? Can't it be interesting or informative, snappy or serious?

Okay, so we're *not* David Letterman. But the lists you're about to read in this special section are *special.*

First of all, there are more than 30 different lists and more than 30 different authors of the lists. We went to the sources: When we wanted to know Ric Flair's 10 Favorite Blondes (or Blonds) in history, we went to the "Nature Boy" himself.

Second of all, they reveal a different side of the wrestlers. All wrestling fanatics (and that's what you are, because you're reading this magazine) want to know everything there is to know about their heroes. We could do that by having them answer your most personal questions. Or we could give them the subject for a list and have them complete the list.

We went the list route.

Third, we got to have some fun. Obviously, the wrestlers didn't come up with *all* of the lists. Top 10 Wrestlers With One-Name Names was all ours. So was the 10 Most Heinous Acts in Wrestling History. What's our idea of heinous? Read 'em and weep. There are some serious crimes and criminals in this bunch (but, unfortunately, never much punishment).

Finally, never before has such a wide assortment of lists from such a wide assortment of people on such a wide assortment of subjects been published at one time in one magazine.

You'd have to call this issue of THE WRESTLER strange. Weird. Just a bit off the beaten path.

It's probably one of our Top 10 Issues.

And definitely one of our Top 10 Issues With Lists.

Not reading it from cover-to-cover would be one of the 11 Most Heinous Acts In Wrestling History.

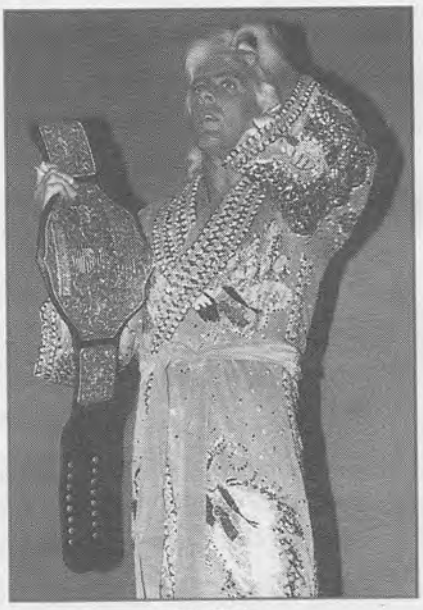
Worse than Gino Hernandez blinding Chris Adams.

At least Adams recovered.

Enjoy.

SHANE DOUGLAS' 10 LEAST FAVORITE NWA/WCW WORLD CHAMPIONS

1. Ric Flair. "On top of everything else, the man has bad taste in women, and women have bad taste in him."
2. Dusty Rhodes. "Fat man. Enough said."
3. Hulk Hogan. "Never liked him. He's always shooting off his mouth."
4. Tommy Rich. "When people tell me how great the NWA used to be, I tell them, 'Tommy Rich.'"
5. Kerry Von Erich. "How'd he ever sneak through?"
6. Lou Thesz. "Man, that guy was old. He was old even when he was young."
7. Sting. "Very cute, if that's what you like."
8. Harley Race. "I don't care how many times he had the damn belt."
9. Jack Brisco. "He was afraid to break the rules ... maybe he just didn't know how!"
10. Rick Steamboat. "I carried the chump when we were teammates."



Ric Flair

Ric & Beth Flair

RIC FLAIR'S 10 ALL-TIME FAVORITE BLONDES (AND BLONDS)

1. Beth Flair
2. Anna-Nicole Smith
3. Phil Simms
4. Marilyn Monroe
5. Cheryl Tiegs
6. Sharon Stone
7. Jack Nicklaus
8. Christie Brinkley
9. Rhonda Shear
10. Madonna

TAMARA MURPHY FYTCH'S TOP 10 FEMALE ROLE MODELS OF ALL-TIME

1. Hillary Rodham-Clinton. "My personal hero."
2. Margaret Thatcher. "A great, strong lady who put men in their places."
3. Lady Godiva. "A freedom rider. She didn't care if the whole world looked."
4. Susan B. Anthony. "She earned the right to have her face on a coin. I will someday, too!"
5. Billie Jean King. "The most influential female athlete of all-time. She's still a great, classy lady."
6. Jacqueline Kennedy-Onassis. "Married powerful men and proved she was more powerful than any of them."
7. Jackie Joyner-Kersee. "A strong, athletic woman who won't play second-best to anybody."
8. Sandra Day O'Connor. "I don't like her politics, but she *was* the first woman named to the Supreme Court."
9. Anita Hill. "She showed great courage getting up there on Capitol Hill and staring down all those hypocrites."
10. Marie Antoinette. "That's right, let 'em eat cake, Marie."

Tamara Murphy Fytch reads about Hillary Rodham-Clinton

Freddie Krueger of *A Nightmare On Elm Street*

MUST-SEE HORROR FLICKS

1. *A Nightmare On Elm Street*
2. *Night Of The Living Dead*
3. *Friday The 13th*
4. *Evil Dead*
5. *Alien*
6. *The Mummy*
7. *Strait-Jacket*
8. *Hellraiser II*
9. *Asylum*
10. *Creepshow*

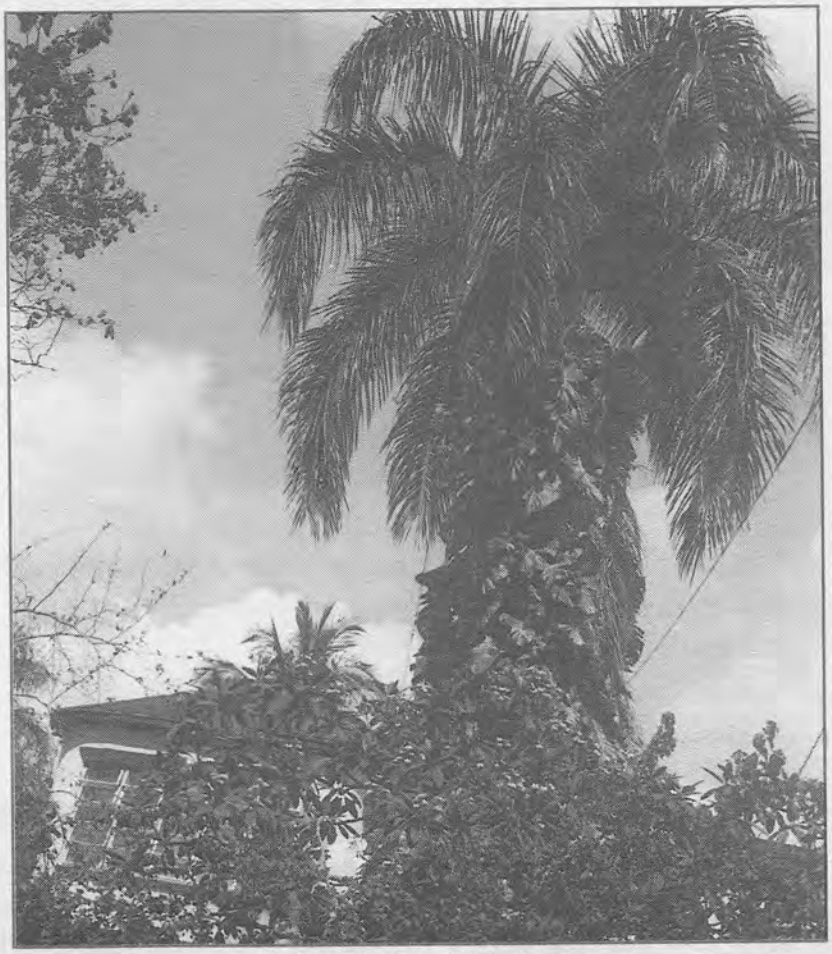
FIVE STREETS IN AMERICA THAT JUST MIGHT BE THE FREEBIRDS' BADSTREET

Philadelphia's South Street

1. South Street (Philadelphia)
2. 42nd Street (New York)
3. Bourbon Street (New Orleans)
4. South State Street (Chicago)
5. Fifth Street (Camden, New Jersey)

IRWIN R. SCHYSTER'S FAVORITE TAX DEDUCTIONS

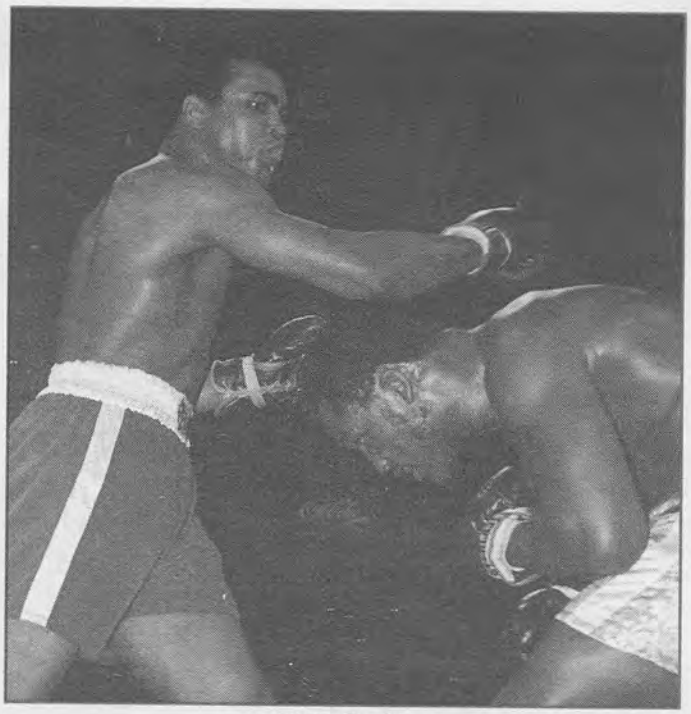
1. Trips to the Bahamas
2. Home office when you're homeless
3. Gifts to mother-in-law
4. Donations to the O.J. Simpson defense fund
5. Gambling losses
6. Computer equipment when all you've bought over the last year is Doom, Myst, and other games
7. Business trips to Japan



Mr. Schyster loves the Bahamas

JOHNNY B. BADD'S FIVE ALL-TIME FAVORITE FIGHTS

1. Muhammad Ali-Joe Frazier (March 8, 1971)
2. Sugar Ray Leonard- Roberto Duran (June 20, 1980)
3. Alexis Arguello-Ray Mancini (October 3, 1981)
4. Marvin Hagler-Thomas Hearns (April 14, 1985)
5. Muhammad Ali- Ken Norton (September 28, 1976)



Ali vs. Frazier

THE 10 MOST HEINOUS ACTS IN WRESTLING HISTORY

Chris Adams gets blinded

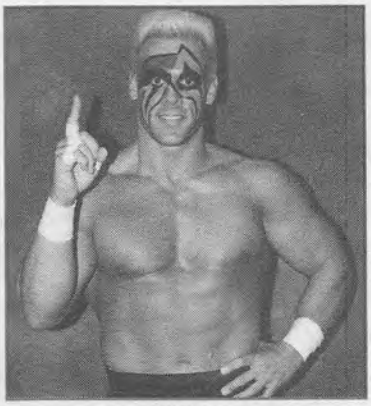
1. Gino Hernandez blinds Chris Adams with a caustic substance (1986)
2. Larry Zbyszko turns against Bruno Sammartino (1979)
3. Owen Hart turns against Bret Hart (1994)
4. Brutus Beefcake turns against Hulk Hogan (1994)
5. Randy Savage slaps Elizabeth (1989)
6. Andre the Giant pulls a cross off Hulk Hogan's neck (1987)
7. John Tolos throws medicated powder in Fred Blassie's face (1971)
8. Superstar Graham mutilates Bob Backlund's WWF World title belt (1983)
9. The Undertaker locks The Ultimate Warrior in an airtight coffin (1991)
10. Stan Hansen breaks Bruno Sammartino's neck with a lariat (1976)

TOP 10 MOVIES IN WHICH WRESTLERS APPEARED

1. *The Princess Bride* (Andre the Giant)
2. *Rocky III* (Hulk Hogan)
3. *Paradise Alley* (Terry Funk)
4. *They Live* (Roddy Piper)
5. *Wiseguys* (Capt. Lou Albano)
6. *No Holds Barred* (Hulk Hogan and Zeus)
7. *The Wrestler* (Verne Gagne, Dusty Rhodes, and Dick Murdoch)
8. *Hell Comes To Frogtown* (Roddy Piper)
9. *Escape From New York* (Ox Baker)
10. *Body Slam* (Roddy Piper, Tonga Kid)

Andre the Giant in *The Princess Bride*

TOP 10 WRESTLERS WITH ONE-WORD NAMES



Sting

1. Sting
2. Animal
3. Hawk
4. Yokozuna
5. Undertaker
6. Sabu
7. Crush
8. Tatanka
9. Kamala
10. Warlord

THE 10 WRESTLERS WHO MADE TERRY FUNK SOREST

1. Dory Funk Jr.
2. Harley Race
3. Ric Flair
4. Sabu
5. Jack Brisco
6. Dory Funk Sr.
7. Eddie Gilbert
8. Cactus Jack
9. Wahoo McDaniel
10. Jerry Lawler

Terry Funk vs. Dory Funk Jr.

SIX WRESTLERS WHO STABBED HULK HOGAN IN THE BACK

Brutus Beefcake turns against Hulk Hogan

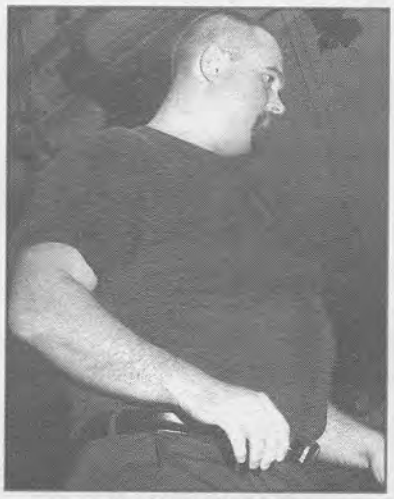
1. Brutus Beefcake
2. Andre the Giant
3. Sgt. Slaughter
4. Paul Orndorff
5. Randy Savage
6. Sid Justice

TONY SCHIAVANE'S 10 FAVORITE SPORTS ANNOUNCERS

1. Tony Kubek. "He knows more about baseball than any man alive."
2. Joe Tate. "I grew up listening to him on 3WE [radio] and patterned my voice after him.
3. Vin Scully. "He's just absolutely tremendous."
4. Mel Allen. "Any long-time Yankee fan who doesn't include Allen is crazy."
5. Bob Costas. "His love passion for baseball reflects mine."
6. Gene Okerlund. "He will go down as the greatest interviewer in the history of this business."
7. Gordon Solie. "He has a tremendous ability to relate the sport's history to the present situations."
8. Ray Scott. "His voice always meant NFL football to me."
9. Keith Olbermann. "He really makes sports a lot of fun."
10. Jack Brickhouse. "A great man and a real pro."

Gordon Solie

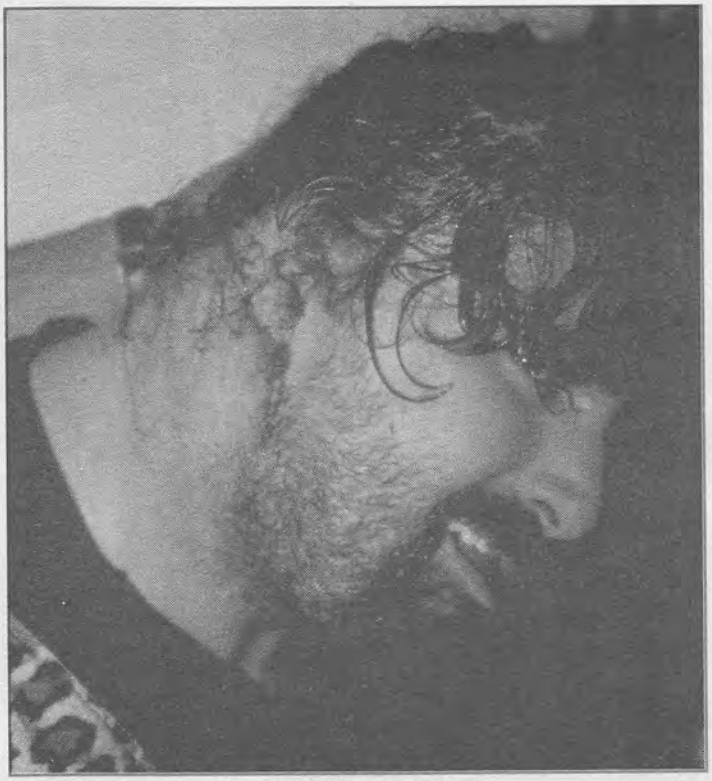
BIG BUBBA ROGERS' *NEXT* 10 MONIKERS



Big Bubba Rogers

1. Big Hot Dog Vendor Man
2. Big Fireman
3. Big Salesman
4. Big Mister Rogers
5. The Crossing Guardian
6. Roger Bossman
7. The Magic Guardian
8. Big Bubba And The Holding Company
9. Guardian Your Future
10. Big Bubba Gump

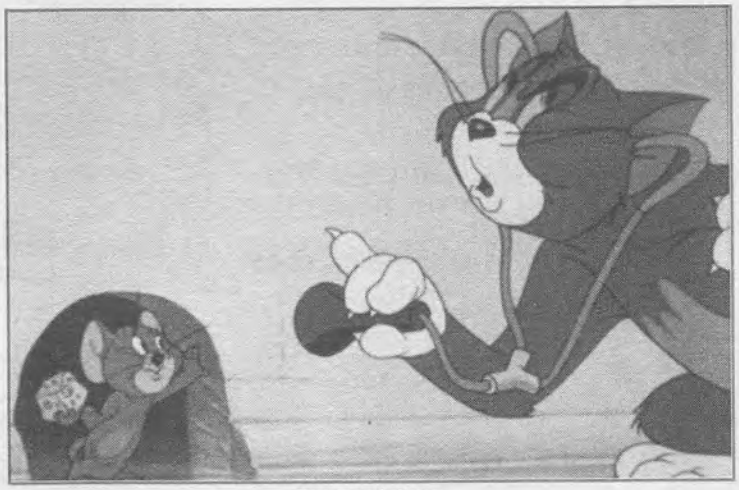
BIG VAN VADER'S EIGHT FAVORITE WAYS TO CRIPPLE AN OPPONENT



Cactus Jack sans one ear

1. Tear his ear off.
2. Piledrive him on the timekeeper's table.
3. Smash the bell over his knee.
4. Tape his mouth and nose shut and cut off all oxygen to his brain.
5. Punch him in the heart.
6. Squeeze his skull.
7. Power-bomb him on a concrete floor.
8. Break a steel chair over his head.

DAVE SULLIVAN'S FAVORITE CARTOON CHARACTERS



Tom and Jerry

1. Tom and Jerry. "It's hard to pick a favorite out of those two. They're both so wacky!"
2. Beavis. "He's smarter than people think."
3. Butt-Head. "I like the way he laughs."
4. Homer Simpson. "*The Simpsons* are my favorite show."
5. Wile E. Coyote. "One of these days, he's going to catch that Roadrunner. I just know it."
6. Jessica from *Who Framed Roger Rabbit?*
7. Stimpy "Ren's too nasty; Stimpy's just a nice guy."
8. Popeye. "He's the sailor man."
9. Magilla Gorilla. "If you've got a gorilla for sale, I'll buy him."
10. Kevin Sullivan. "He's too stupid to be real."

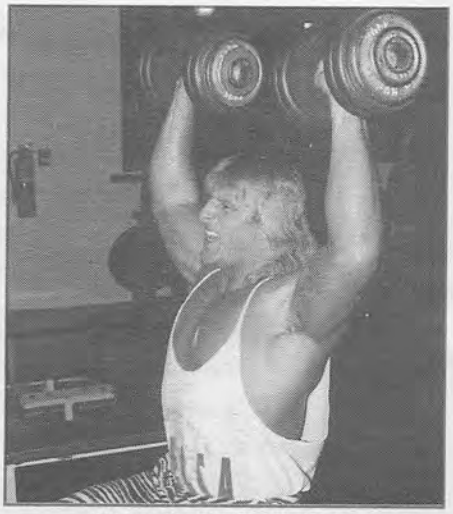
DALLAS PAGE'S SEXIEST WOMEN OF ALL-TIME

1. Marilyn Monroe. "She's timeless. In a way, I'm glad we didn't get to see her get old and wrinkly."
2. Sharon Stone. "That woman's got some hot legs."
3. Raquel Welch. "Need I say more?"
4. Jane Fonda. "That's before she started opening her yap."
5. Anna-Nicole Smith. "I wouldn't mind getting into a pair of Guess jeans with her."
6. Sophia Loren. "I like classy women."
7. Daisy Fuentes. "I saw her hosting some Miss Universe pageant or some thing the other day. She was better looking than any of the contestants."
8. Demi Moore. "You gotta see her in *Disclosure*."
9. Pamela Anderson. "Hottest body in television history."
10. Tawny Kitaen. "The only thing good about that new *WKRP* show."

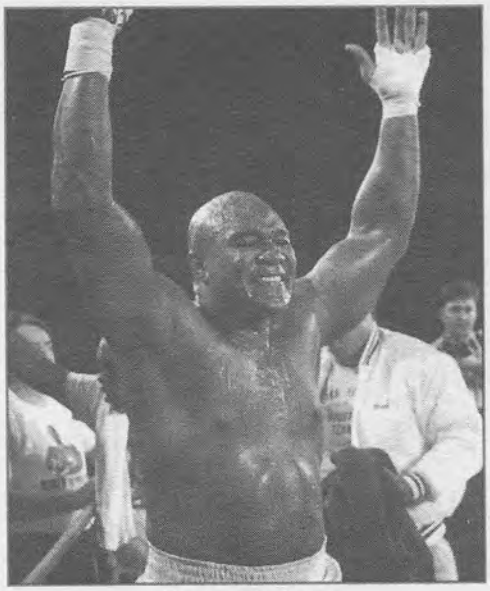
Marilyn Monroe

SIX LIKELY PLACES TO SEE WRESTLERS (EXCEPT FOR WRESTLING RINGS) WHEN THERE'S A CARD IN TOWN

1. Any Gold's Gym
2. The hotel restaurant
3. An area children's hospital
4. The shopping mall
5. Charity functions
6. Video stores



Owen Hart in Gold's Gym



George Foreman

10 NON-WRESTLING ATHLETES WHO MIGHT MAKE GOOD WRESTLERS

1. George Foreman
2. Deion Sanders
3. Bob Probert
4. Shaquille O'Neal
5. Tonya Harding
6. Cecil Fielder
7. Andre Agassi
8. Charles Barkley
9. Tex Cobb
10. Bobby Bonilla

JIM CORNETTE'S TOP SIX THINGS TO DO WITH A TENNIS RACKET

1. Stick the handle into an enemy's gut.
2. Bash people over the head.
3. Use it as a spaghetti strainer.
4. Stick it in front of your face and make believe you're O.J.
5. Offer The Gangstas a million dollars if they can guess how many strings there are in a tennis racket.
6. Play tennis.

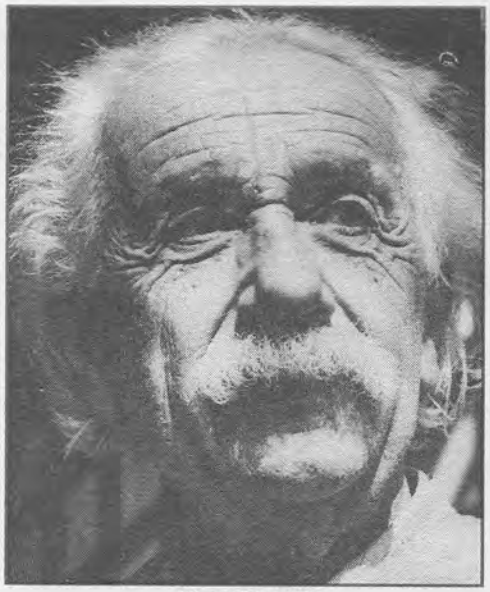
Jim Cornette attacks Tony Anthony

Hulk Hogan at Venice Beach

HULK HOGAN'S FIVE FAVORITE BEACHES

1. Venice Beach, California
2. Malibu Beach, California
3. Any beach in Hawaii
4. Daytona Beach, Florida
5. Hilton Head Island, South Carolina

PAUL E. DANGEROUSLY'S TOP 10 IDEAL DINNER GUESTS FROM ALL OF HISTORY



Albert Einstein

1. Albert Einstein
2. Adolf Hitler
3. Jesus Christ
4. Julius Caesar
5. Charles Manson
6. James Dean
7. Marilyn Monroe
8. Lee Harvey Oswald
9. O.J. Simpson
10. 911

CAPT. LOU ALBANO'S 10 BEST TAG TEAMS HE EVER MANAGED

Capt. Lou with Johnny and Jimmy Valiant

1. Jimmy and Johnny Valiant. "Great teamwork. They wrestled together like they were brothers."
2. The British Bulldogs. "The best from a technical standpoint."
3. The New Headshrinkers. "Definitely, absolutely can move up to the top spot."
4. The Samoans. "Even I didn't understand them most of the time."
5. The Moondogs. "Very dangerous."
6. Barry Windham and Mike Rotundo. "Biggest bunch of egos I've ever worked with, but really, really good."
7. The Mongols. "Just vicious."
8. The Yukon Lumberjacks. "Cagey and brilliant."
9. Baron Mikel Scicluna and King Curtis. "They loved blood."
10. Luke Graham and Tarzan Tyler. "My first World champs."

ABDULLAH THE BUTCHER'S FAVORITE FOREIGN OBJECTS

Abdullah carves up Tony Atlas

1. Pencils
2. Forks
3. Erasers
4. Chicken bones
5. Door jambs
6. Extension cords
7. Anything else he can get his hands on

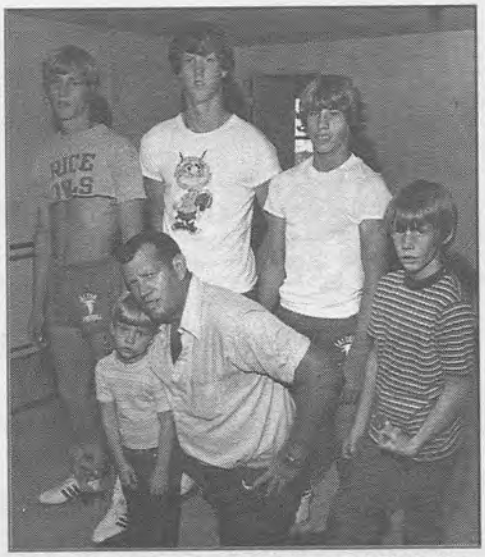
TOP 10 WRESTLERS FROM PARTS UNKNOWN

The Undertaker

1. The Undertaker
2. The Bullet
3. Mr. Atlanta
4. The Grappler
5. The Black Demon
6. Super Destroyer
7. Master of Pain
8. Missing Link
9. Mr. Olympia
10. Repo Man

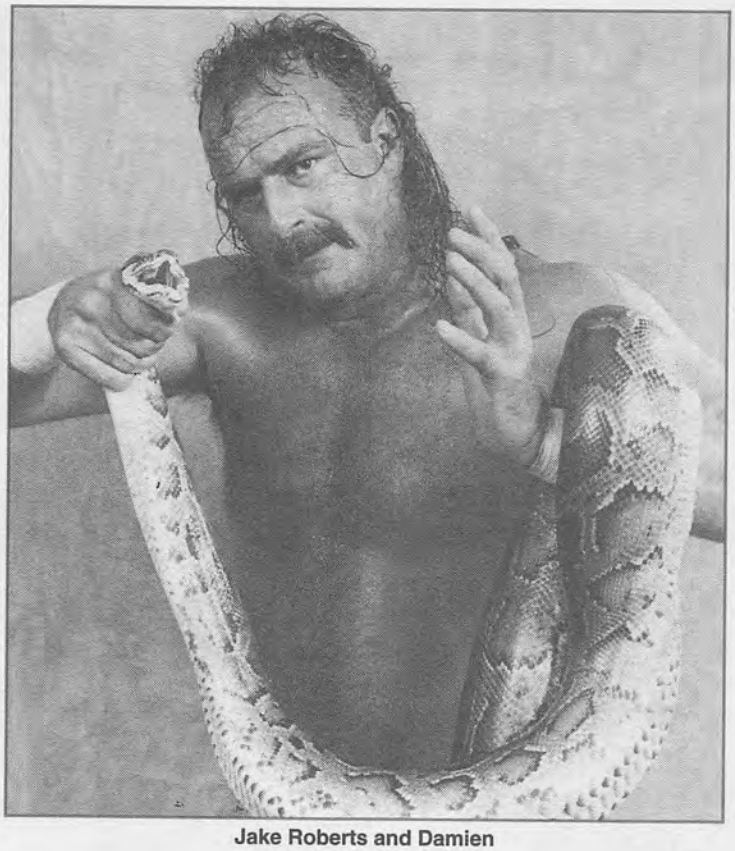
13 GREAT WRESTLING FAMILIES (MINIMUM THREE WRESTLING MEMBERS)

1. The Von Erichs. (Fritz, Kerry, David, Kevin, Mike, Chris)
2. The Harts (Stu, Bret, Owen, Bruce, Keith, Smith, Wayne)
3. The Hennigs (Larry, Curt, Jesse)
4. The Funks (Dory Sr., Dory Jr., Terry)
5. The Andersons (Gene, Lars, Ole, Arn, Brad, Bryant)
6. The Vachons ("Butcher" Paul, "Mad Dog" Maurice, Vivian, Luna)
7. The Valiants (Jimmy, Johnny, Jerry)
8. The Grahams (Jerry, Eddie, Luke, Billy, Mike)
9. The Gilberts (Tommy, Eddie, Doug)
10. The Armstrongs (Bob, Brad, Brian, Steve, Scott)
11. The Malenkos (Boris, Dean, Joe, Debbie)
12. The Duseks (Ernie, Joe, Emile, Rudy, Wallie)
13. The Garibaldis (Gino, Leo, Joe, Chick)


Kevin, David, Kerry, Mike, Fritz, and Chris Von

WRESTLING'S GREATEST PETS

1. Jake Roberts' snake, Damien
2. The British Bulldogs' pet bulldog, Matilda
3. Koko B. Ware's macaw, Frankie
4. Rick and Scott Steiner's bulldog, Arnold
5. The Iron Sheik's camel



Jake Roberts and Damien

FIVE FAMOUS ARRESTS (OR COURT CASES) IN WRESTLING HISTORY

1. Vince McMahon's trial for illegal distribution of steroids. (He was acquitted.)
2. Jose Gonzales' arrest for allegedly murdering Bruiser Brody. (He was acquitted.)
3. Hacksaw Duggan and The Iron Sheik's arrest in New Jersey for possession of marijuana and cocaine. (Both men suspended by the WWF)
4. Jerry Lawler's arrest for statutory rape. (Charges were later dropped.)
5. George T. Zahorian's trial for illegal distribution of steroids to WWF wrestlers. (He was convicted and sentenced to three years in prison.)

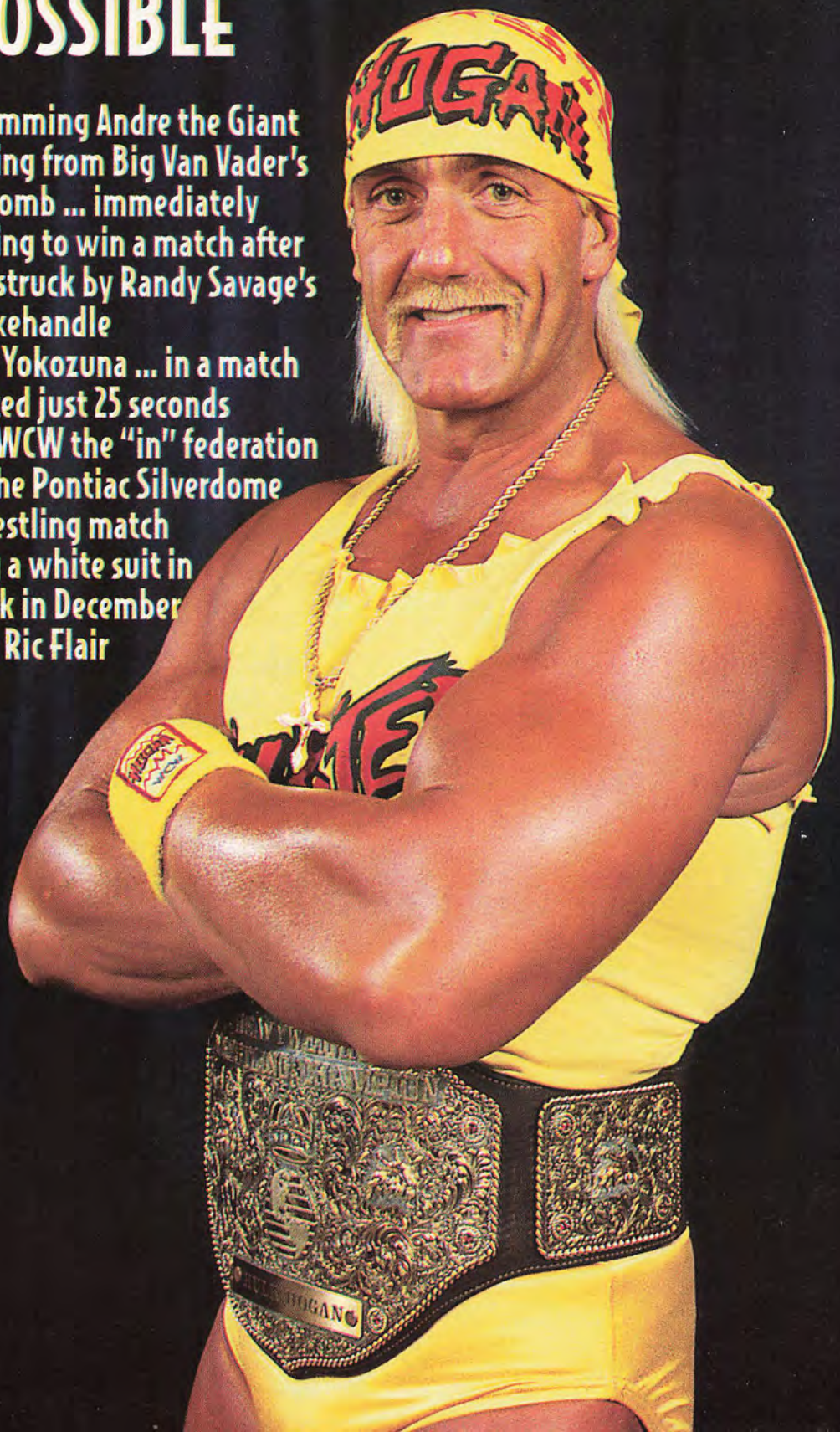
Vince McMahon leaves the courtroom

JEFF JARRETT'S 10 FAVORITE COUNTRY MUSIC

1. *Ain't I Great*, Jeff Jarrett
2. *Ten Feet Tall & Bulletproof*, Travis Tritt
3. *Pocket Full Of Gold*, Vince Gill
4. *I Don't Care*, Buck Owens
5. *The Fightin' Side Of Me*, Merle Haggard
6. *Honky Tonk Attitude*, Joe Diffie
7. *Major Moves*, Hank Williams Jr.
8. *The Chase*, Garth Brooks
9. *Half Nelson*, Willie Nelson
10. *Put Yourself In My Shoes*, Clint Black

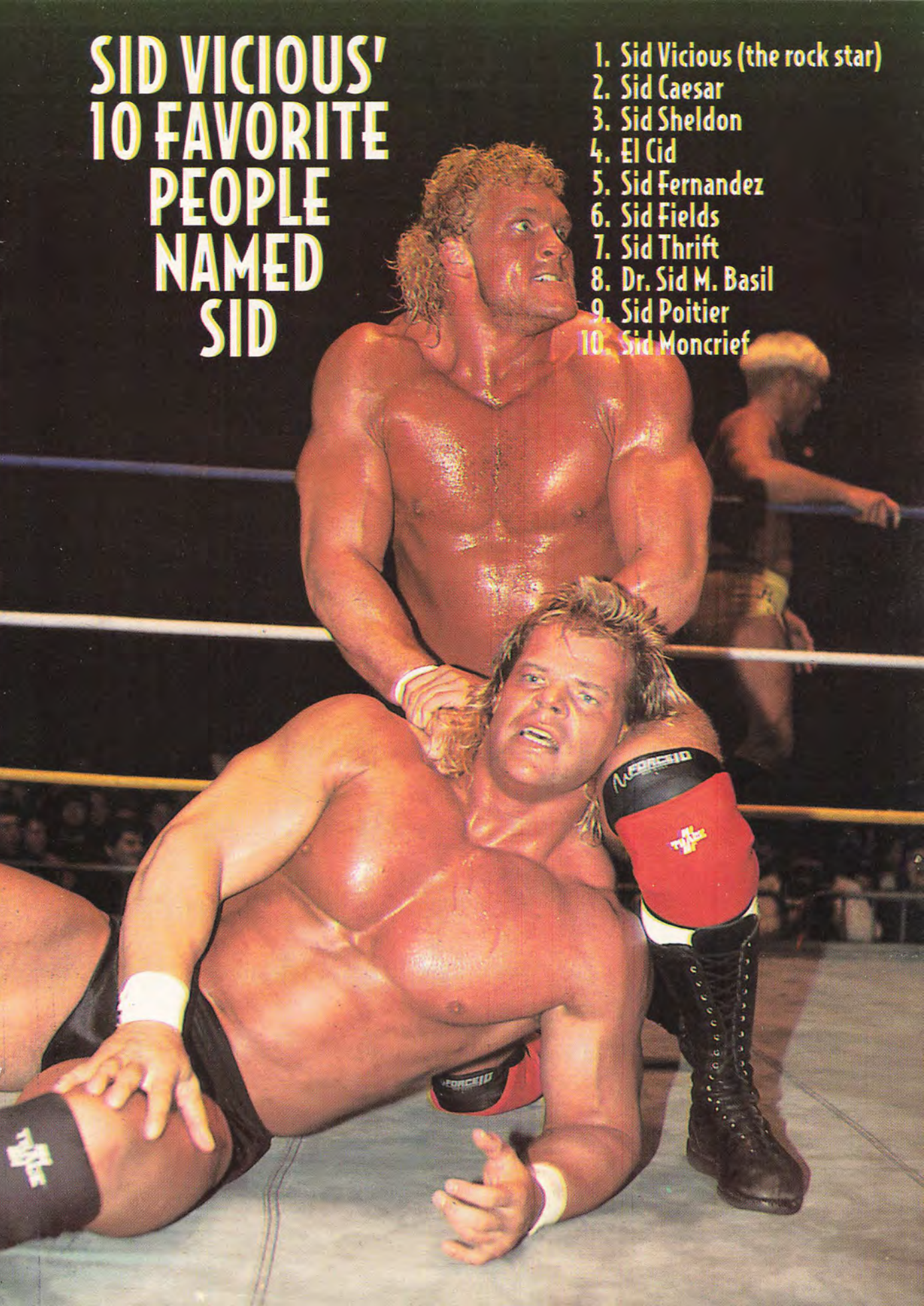
EIGHT "IMPOSSIBLE" FEATS HULK HOGAN PROVED WEREN'T SO IMPOSSIBLE

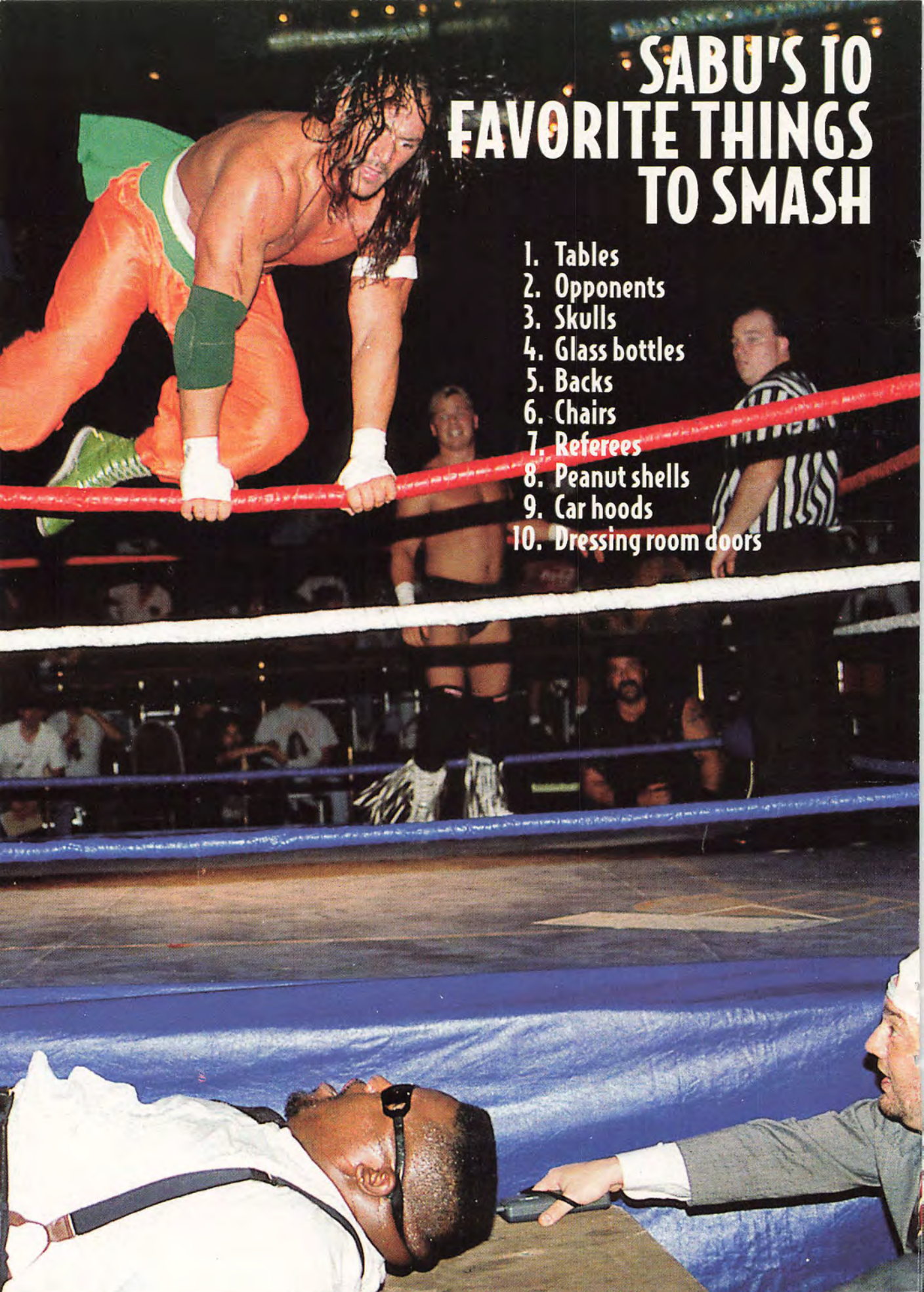
1. Bodyslamming Andre the Giant
2. Recovering from Big Van Vader's power bomb ... immediately
3. Recovering to win a match after getting struck by Randy Savage's flying axehandle
4. Pinning Yokozuna ... in a match that lasted just 25 seconds
5. Making WCW the "in" federation
6. Filling the Pontiac Silverdome for a wrestling match
7. Wearing a white suit in New York in December
8. Retiring Ric Flair



SID VICIOUS' 10 FAVORITE PEOPLE NAMED SID

1. Sid Vicious (the rock star)
2. Sid Caesar
3. Sid Sheldon
4. El Cid
5. Sid Fernandez
6. Sid Fields
7. Sid Thrift
8. Dr. Sid M. Basil
9. Sid Poitier
10. Sid Moncrief

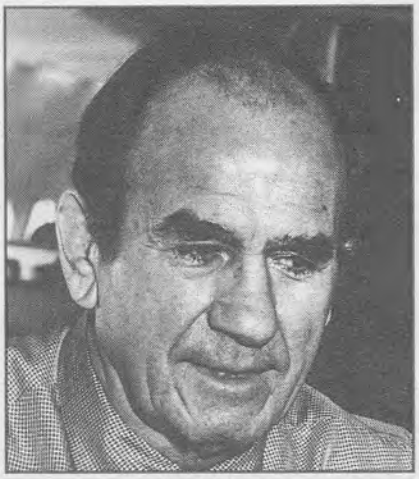




SABU'S 10 FAVORITE THINGS TO SMASH

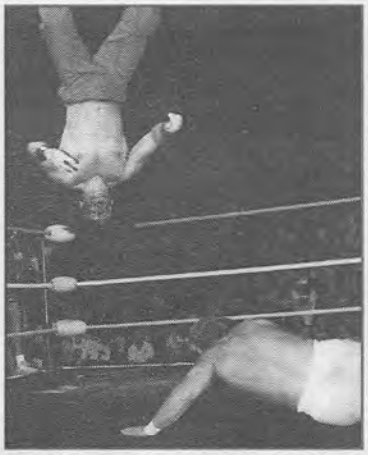
1. Tables
2. Opponents
3. Skulls
4. Glass bottles
5. Backs
6. Chairs
7. Referees
8. Peanut shells
9. Car hoods
10. Dressing room doors

MATT BROCK'S FAVORITE WRESTLERS TO INTERVIEW


Lou Thesz

1. Lou Thesz. "Whenever I need to know something, I call Lou."
2. Ric Flair. "People know him as flamboyant and a loudmouth, but he always gives an honest opinion."
3. Buddy Rogers. "The sport misses him terribly."
4. Verne Gagne. "Although people blame him for the fall of the AWA, the truth is that he was a visionary."
5. Fritz Von Erich. "Back in his wrestling days, nobody was tougher."
6. Bruno Sammartino. "Always willing to talk."
7. Bret Hart. "A real gentleman in every way."
8. Jerry Lawler. "The funniest man in any locker room."
9. George Steele. "One time I actually got him to say something intelligent."
10. Hulk Hogan. "Just kidding."

SEVEN MOVES AND HOLDS THAT DIDN'T EXIST IN THE 1970s (BUT EXIST NOW)


The Great Muta's moonsault

1. Moonsault
2. Power bomb
3. Frankensteiner
4. Choke-slam
5. Scorpion deathlock/ sharpshooter
6. DDT
7. "Rude awakening"

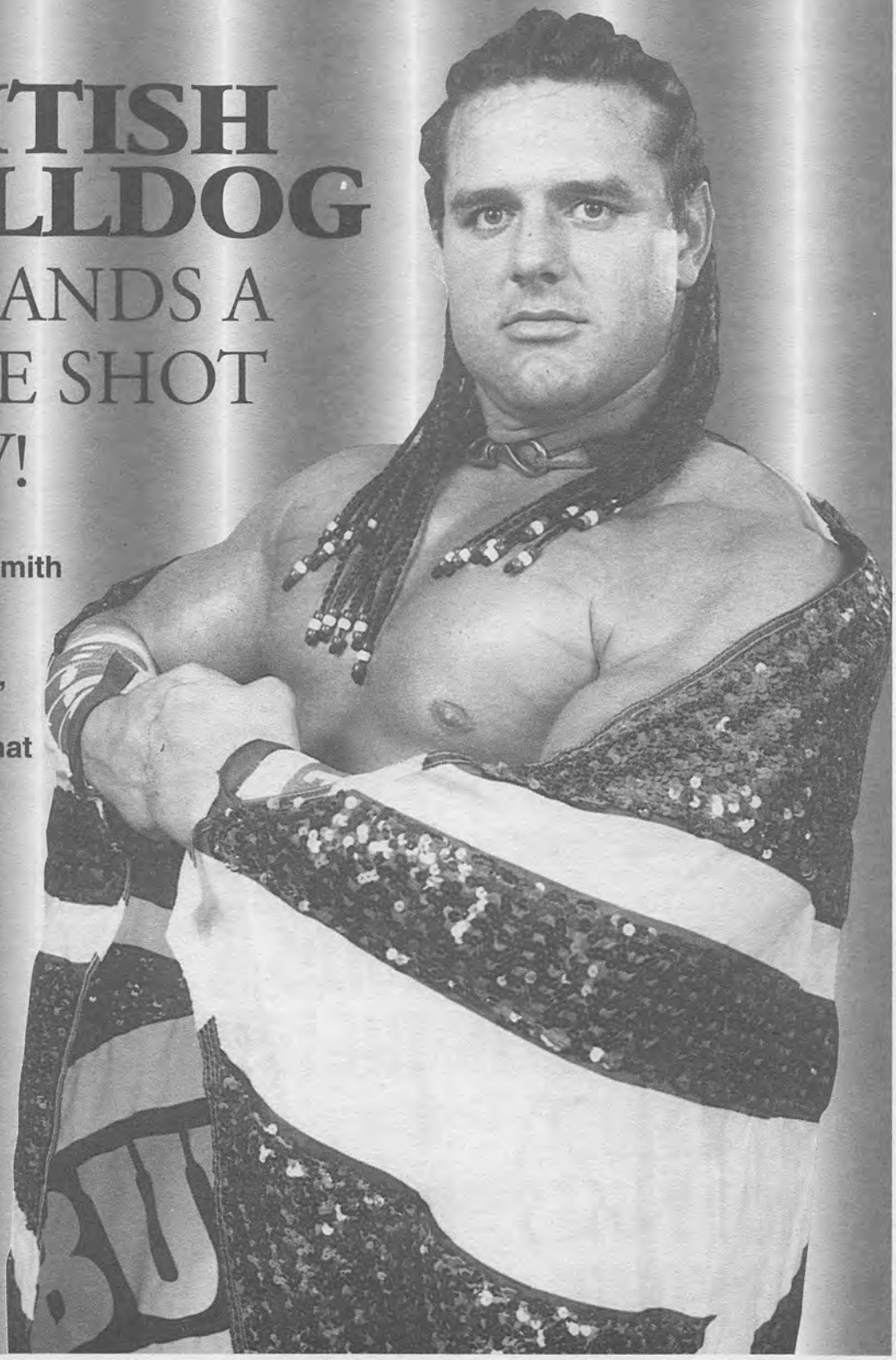
FIVE MOVES AND HOLDS THAT EXISTED IN THE 1970s (BUT ALMOST NOBODY USES THEM NOW)

1. Abdominal stretch
2. Boston crab
3. Clawhold
4. Full-nelson
5. Neckbreaker

Ric Flair's abdominal stretch

HE'S BARKING ... AND READY TO BITE:

THE BRITISH BULLDOG DEMANDS A TITLE SHOT NOW!



Davey Boy Smith has always courted the favor of fans, friends, and family. But that favor is not translating into a WWF World title shot, and he could soon take a more aggressive route

By Steve Anderson

"GIVE AND YOU shall receive" is an age-old saying by which many people abide. Give of yourself and be there for others, and you will be rewarded.

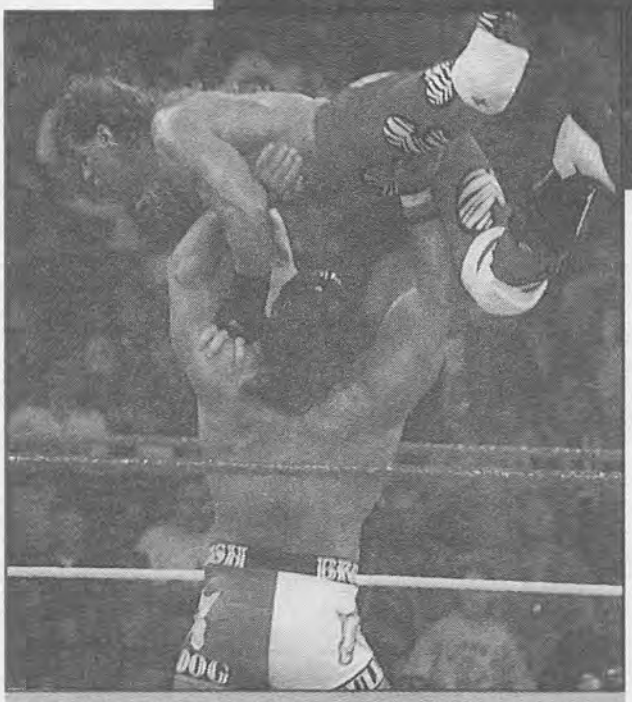
Tell it to "British Bulldog" Davey Boy Smith. As of late, he has been giving of his services to his brother-in-law Bret Hart and has received nothing in return—at least nothing in the form of a deserved World title shot.

He re-entered the WWF last summer at the request of Bret to even up the odds in his battles with brother Owen and Jim Neidhart. He teamed with Bret and seconded him for his title defense against Bob Backlund at Survivor Series. For the latter effort, "Bulldog" received a face full of steel steps, courtesy of Owen. Still he continued to stand behind Bret for the sake of the Hart family. Now, finally, Smith is ready to step to the forefront.

With Bret and Owen still going at it and Neidhart long gone from the federation, Smith wants to reap what he has sown. He has decisively defeated the likes of Owen, Backlund, and King Kong Bundy.

At the Royal Rumble, he was as close as you can get to winning. Only the sole of Shawn Michaels' wrestling boot prevented Smith from a WrestleMania XI World title shot. It was Michaels who was to get the chance to face Diesel for the World title. And Davey Boy was forced to watch ... and wait ... some more!

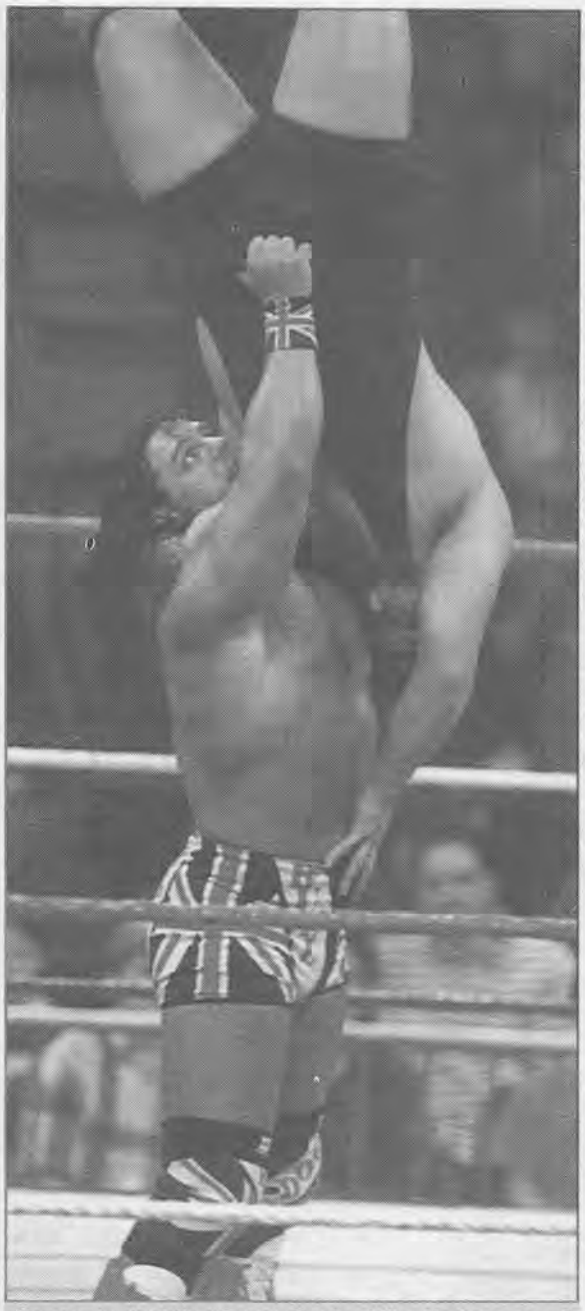
Bob Backlund has been no match for the raw power of Davey Boy. Backlund is the one getting many title shots, though; that doesn't make much sense to the "British Bulldog."



Smith thought he had won the 1995 Royal Rumble by eliminating Shawn Michaels, but Michaels' feet never hit the floor. Davey Boy's runner-up performance hasn't advanced his career like he hoped it would.

In two meetings with WWF President Jack Tunney this winter, Smith *demanded* a shot at the WWF title. His argument is that his runner-up performance at the Rumble must mean something. He wants a World title shot *now*.

Smith has earned his place at the front of the line. Instead, Backlund keeps getting title shots. So does Bundy. But since Davey



No one is doubting Davey Boy's skills. He has one of the finest vertical suplexes in the world. Besides winning and winning and winning, what will it take for him to get a title shot? His frustration is understandable.

Boy has beaten both of them, shouldn't that make him the top contender? Apparently not in Tunney's wacky world of wrestling.

Smith's demands have fallen on deaf ears. So, despite all his efforts in piling up victories and coming to the aid of his brother-in-law, all "Bulldog" has to show for it is a Royal Rumble silver medal and a Survivor Series knot on the head.

Not the WWF World title belt.

"The Hitman" is not necessarily returning the many favors of his brother-in-law, either. Bret is so focused on destroying his brother Owen that he is forsaking everything else. He doesn't seem the least bit interested in the affairs of Davey Boy. Too bad, because Hart has clout. He used that clout to secure his Royal Rumble title shot. Many thought it would go to Backlund or Bundy. One can only wonder if he would use his influence on Smith's behalf. The "Bulldog" can only wonder what he has to do.

History shows that when a wrestler faces building adversity and simmering frustration, he lashes out. The lashing out usually comes in the form of aggressive tactics and questionable behavior. The next step is a turn to rulebreaking.

But could he do it? Could Davey Boy Smith, a proven fan favorite, turn his back on his fans? Could he add to the Hart family feud by busting the rules? Bret Hart may not be the World champion, but he is still the WWF's premier fan favorite. To cross over to rulebreaking, one must cross "The Hitman" himself.

"Nonsense," barked an exasperated Stu Hart. "This family has enough trouble with Owen without you media people stirring the pot. Davey Boy would never do that. Sure he's frustrated at not getting his just due. But our family appreciates what he has done. I know Davey Boy, and that's enough for him."

For a professional wrestler whose ultimate goal is to be a world champion, it shouldn't be. Bruce Hart, Bret and Owen's brother, offered a different view. "Bret *does* appreciate all that Davey has done for him. But that doesn't translate into a World title shot. And if you're unable to get that shot, you have to try a different approach, a different style. He'd almost have to ..."

Bruce stopped himself and shook his head. Then he paused to reflect. "But Davey Boy would never do that ... would he?"

Was he stating fact, or raising doubt?

Experts often point to the purity of Rick Steamboat, a man who never saw the inside of a rulebreakers' locker room during his 18-year career, when arguing that a wrestler can be great without ever turning bad. But Steamboat got world title shots in both the WWF and the NWA/WCW. He capitalized on one chance in the NWA. Smith has had very few shots and has yet to win a world title. If playing by the rules, waiting patiently, helping others, and not rocking the boat doesn't work, he should formulate a plan "B" for getting a shot at the WWF World title.

And what exactly would be his plan "B"?

He could try the "friend of Hulk Hogan" approach. Buddy up to

Maybe the "British Bulldog" saw what went down between Brutus Beefcake and Hulk Hogan. "The Butcher" got a title shot by attacking his friend; he never really "earned" one. A Davey Boy-Bret Hart feud? Don't bet against it.

the champ, then brutally attack him. *Presto!* Instant number-one contendership whether you deserve it or not. Case in point: Brutus Beefcake attacked the "Hulkster" and, without wrestling a single significant match in WCW, he received a Starrcade World title shot ... at Hogan's request.

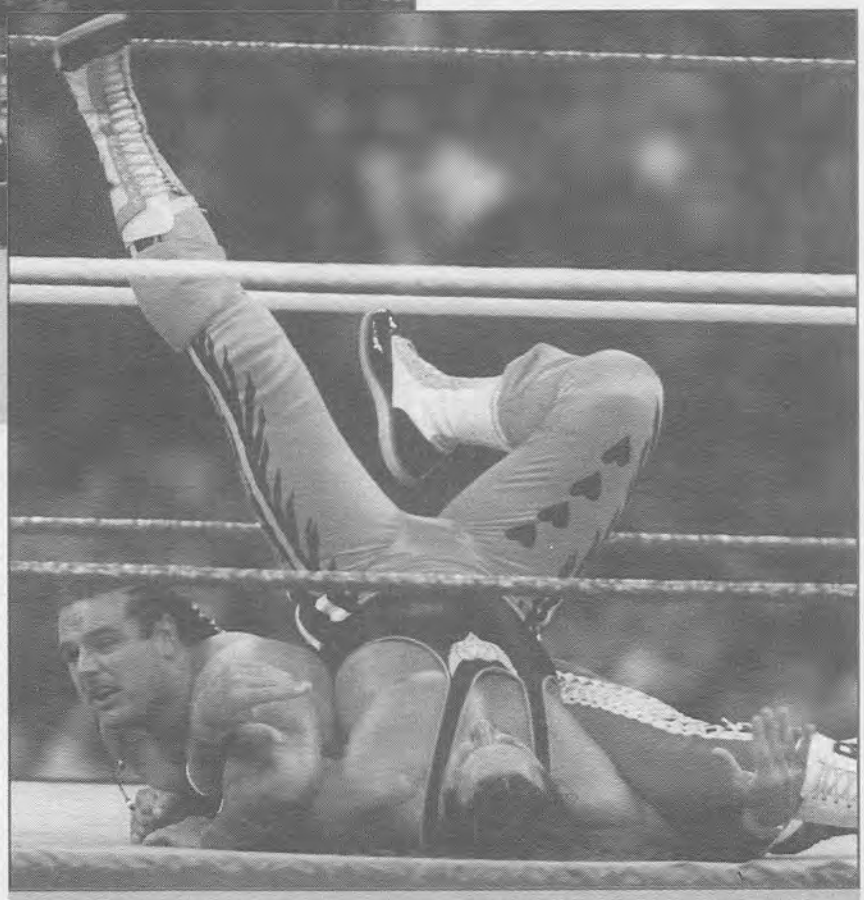
Or he could turn against Bret and create yet another family crisis that would have the fans and federation heads buzzing. If he defeated Bret (he did just that at SummerSlam '92), Tunney could not ignore his plea. Fans would say that even "Big Daddy Cool" couldn't beat Bret, but the "British Bulldog" did.

In the meantime, Davey Boy Smith stands and waits. He waits as other wrestlers pull ahead of him in line. Wrestlers with less-than-stellar records. Wrestlers he has defeated. Wrestlers who break rules.

Another age-old adage is "Good things come to those who wait." Davey Boy feels he has waited long enough. It's his turn to walk the aisle in a WWF World title match.

But would Bret, the Hart family, and the fans support him?

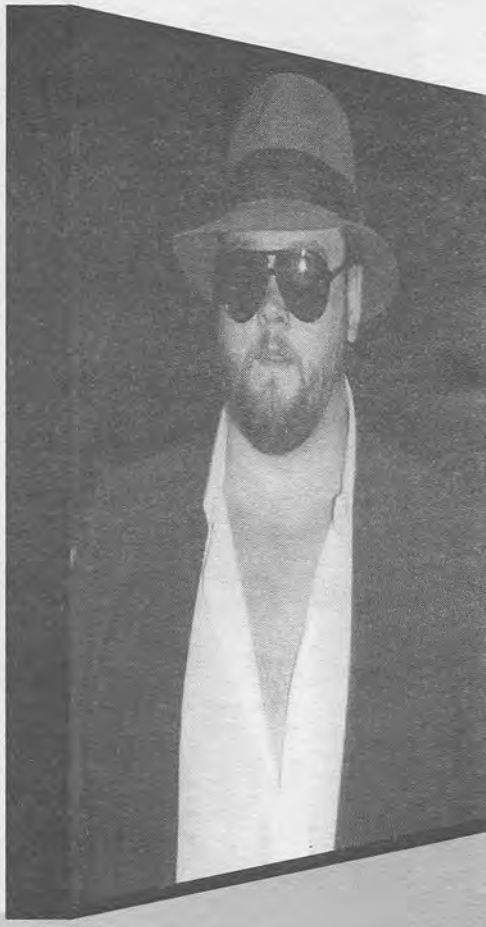
And, once he finally secured a title match, would he care about them? □



Davey Boy beat Bret for the Intercontinental title at SummerSlam '92. If he challenged—and defeated—"The Hitman" again, Jack Tunney would almost have no choice but to grant him his title shot.

Our Expert Analysis Reveals:

BIG BUBBA ROGERS IS A PSYCHOLOGICAL BASKET CASE!



(Editor's note: World-renowned sports psychologist Dr. Sidney M. Basil is often called upon by the editors of this magazine to analyze wrestlers and their feuds. This expert provides unique insight into the workings of an athlete's mind. This time, we asked Dr. Basil to analyze Big Bubba Rogers, whose changes of personality have alarmed many people within the sport.)

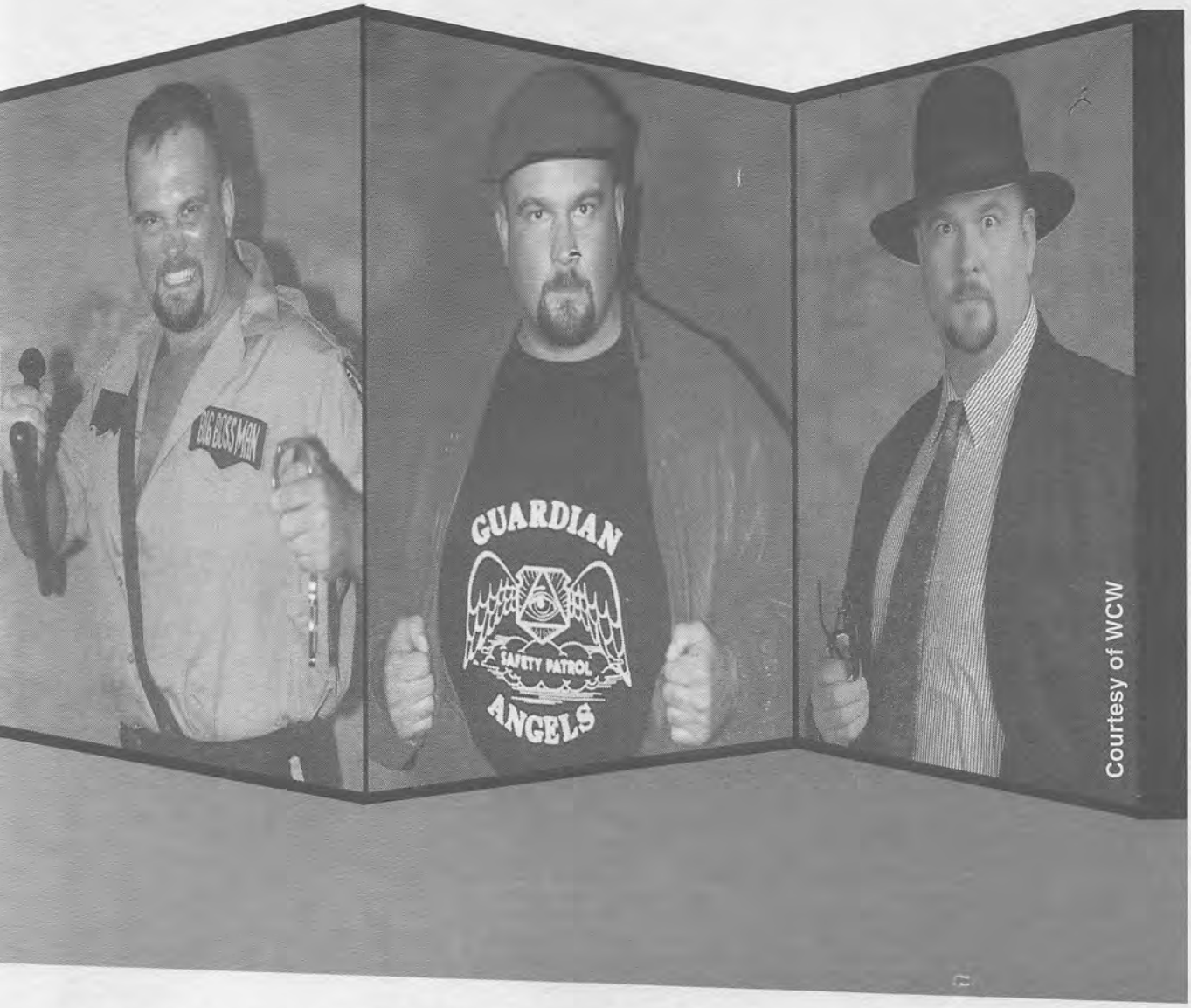
By Dr. Sidney M. Basil

JUDGING FROM experience, my guess is that most of you readers think I am going to compare Big Bubba Rogers' situation to that of the fictional character Sybil or to some other famous multiple-personality disorder cases. Not so, although at first I suspected that's what we had on our hands. Only after much research did I realize such a diagnosis was far too simple.

You see, the typical sufferer of a multiple-personality disorder has been suffering from the problem for most of his or her life. It is something that develops early in childhood, perhaps because of a traumatic experience. Only in rare instances does it begin to develop later in adulthood, but even when it does, it's usually because of a more traumatic experience that the subject finds impossible to deal with.

I quickly discovered, however, that Mr. Rogers has not suffered from multiple-personality disorder for his entire life and, more importantly, that there has been no single traumatic experience to which we can point.

Unfortunately, that's the bad news. Multiple-personality disorders, once diagnosed, can be successfully treated with psychotherapy, rest, and even hypnosis. I'm afraid what we're dealing with here is something far more complex and, perhaps, even



Courtesy of WCW

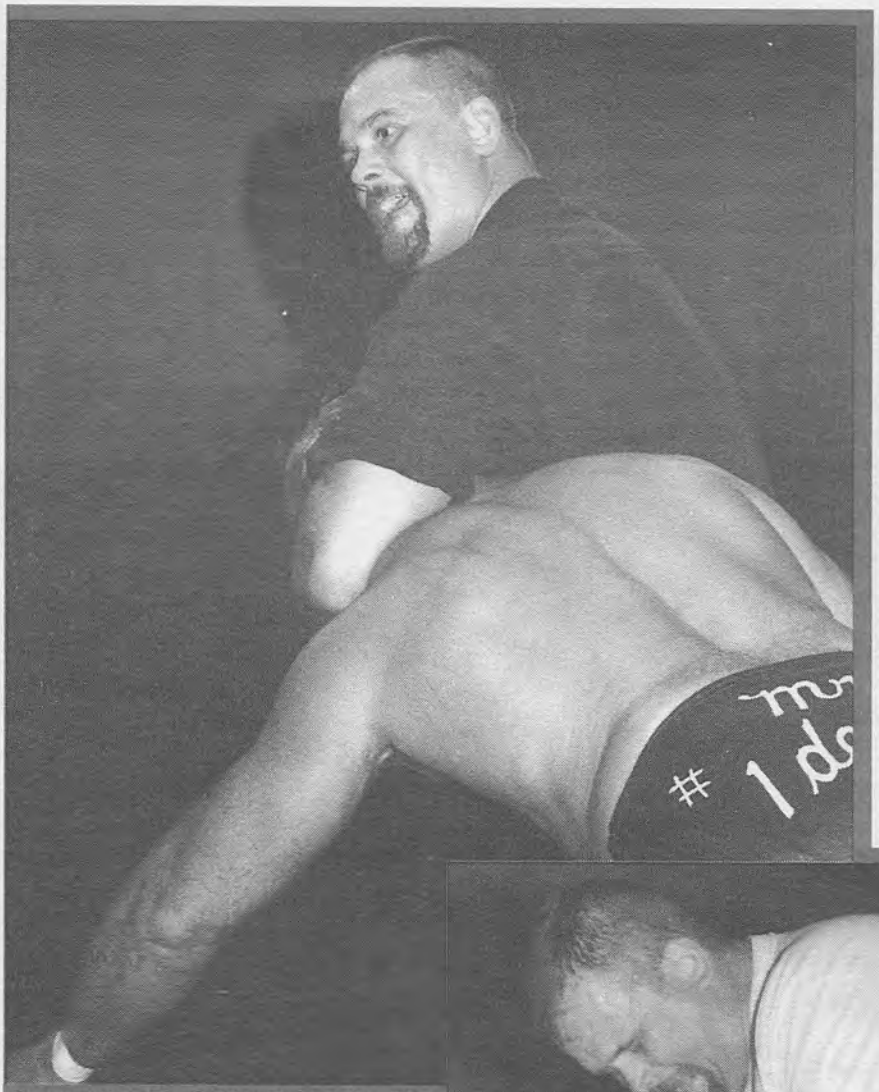
the beginning of something much larger.

If we trace the career of Mr. Rogers, we find that he was first known as Big Bubba Rogers in the UWF. Then he signed with the WWF and, as many wrestlers do, took on a new name: Big Bossman. Nothing unusual or special about that. He retained the name Big Bossman for several years, claiming to be a former prison guard from Cobb County, Georgia.

Two things happened shortly after he made the jump from the WWF to WCW. First, he was forced to get rid of the name Big Bossman, or The Boss, as he was briefly known. Then The Guardian Angels of New York City refused to let him use the name Guardian Angel until he proved himself as a peace enforcer. At that point, Mr. Rogers was thrown into a personality conflict from which he has still not recovered.

This is an appropriate time to point out that there are not two Big Bubba Rogers. I cannot see a situation where he would take on the Guardian Angel identity as a fan favorite and suddenly switch to the evil Bubba Rogers. Nor do I think Rogers is inherently evil. It's also important to point out that Big Bossman in the WWF was both a fan favorite and a rule-breaker, while victims of multiple-personality disorder usually assign different names to their different personalities. Not so in this case, which is the main reason I have not assigned a Sybil-type diagnosis to Mr. Rogers.

What I am sad to say, however, is that Mr. Rogers is, in layman's terms, a basket case. Perhaps you might say that he doesn't have both of his oars in the water. We prefer to use more clinical terms to describe the situation.

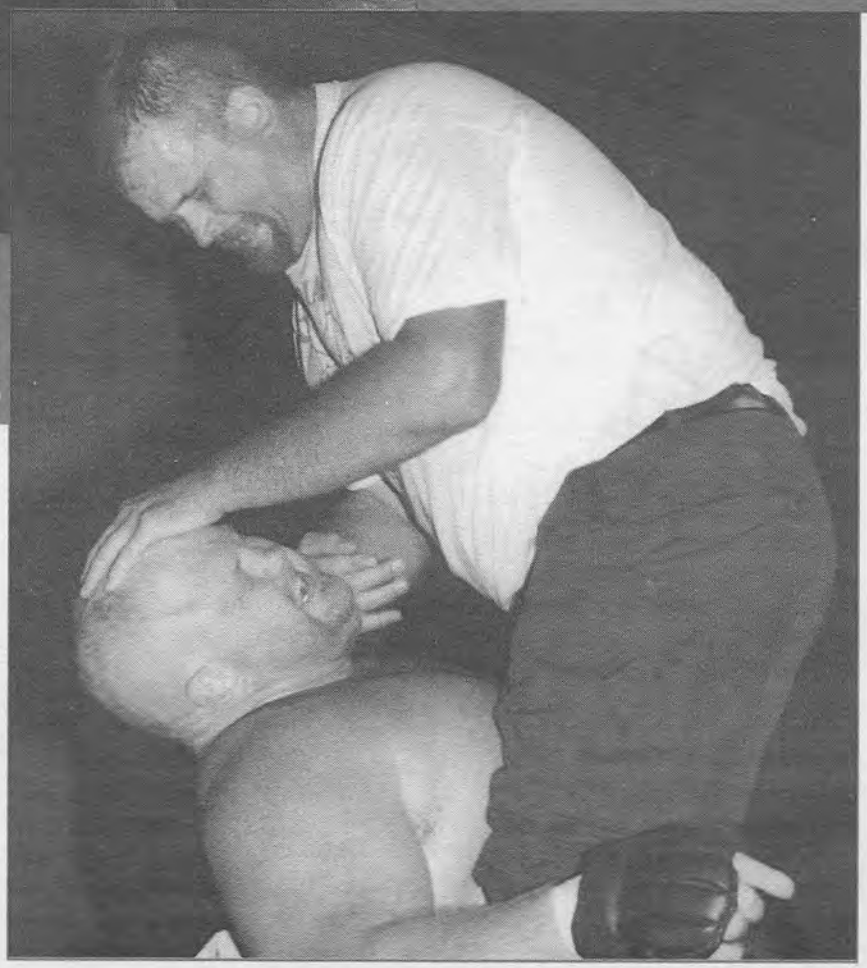


proper solution or combination of solutions. Thus, he is not honestly dealing with the reality of himself or his career.

Perhaps what Mr. Rogers needs, more than anything else, is career counseling.

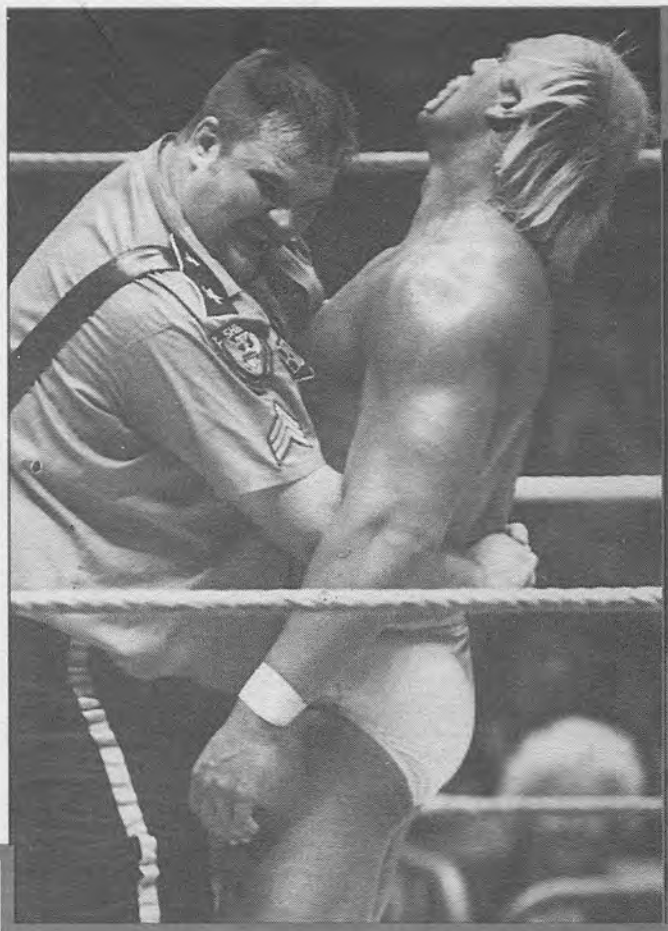
To illustrate my point, lets look back at an incident that occurred at a Clash of the Champions broadcast in late-January. At this event, Mr. Rogers—then known as The Guardian Angel—became incensed that his role as special referee was usurped by federation outsiders. He lost control of himself and attacked Sting and Nick Patrick.

Shortly after the incident, an obviously perturbed Gene Okerlund, a WCW broadcaster, approached The Guardian Angel and said, "What is this, Big Bubba

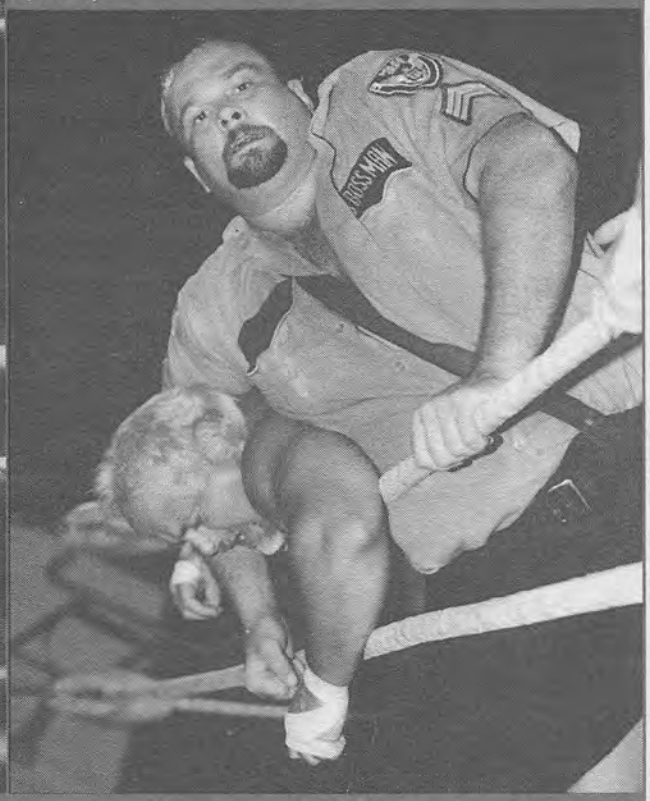


For months, Big Bubba Rogers (as The Guardian Angel) Paul Orndorff battled (above) and Big Van Vader (right) in WCW and met with little success. Dr. Basil argues that Rogers never recovered from a personality conflict that arose when he had to drop the name The Boss.

Rather than having three or four personalities—Big Bubba Rogers, Big Bossman, The Boss, and The Guardian Angel—Mr. Rogers is struggling with the definition of one personality. His career has been thrown into turmoil by a series of unfortunate events, and he is struggling to escape the deep quicksand that has washed over his psyche. He has assigned blame for his career problems to his four ring names and is constantly switching among the four in search of the



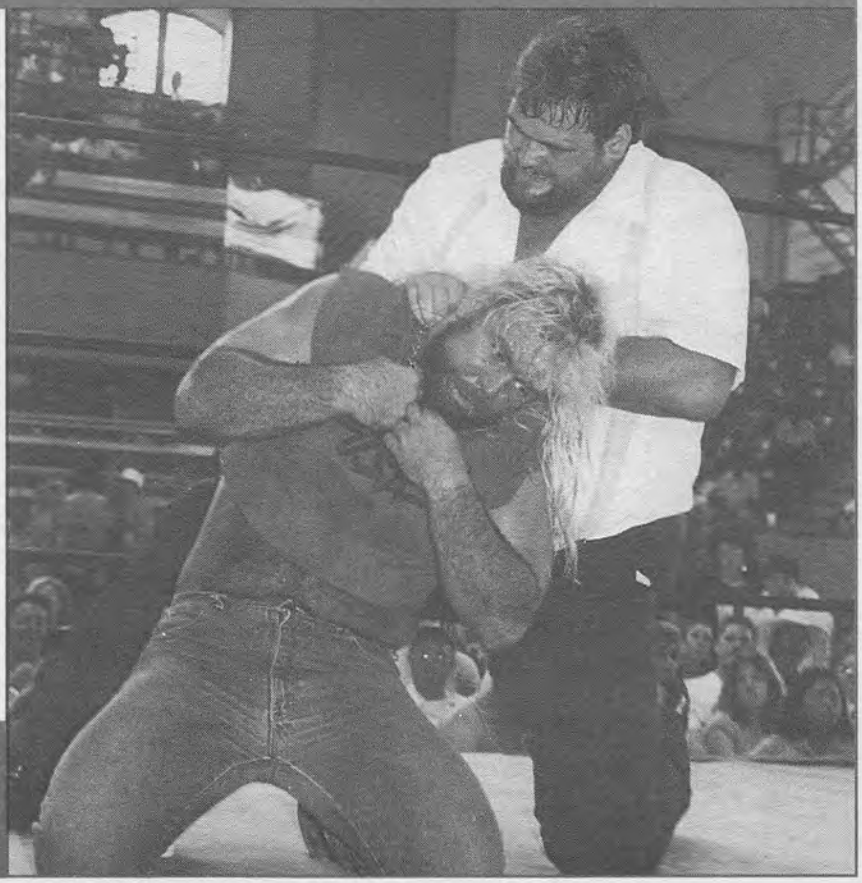
One of Rogers' problems, says Basil, is that he had two separate personalities during his Big Bossman days. He battled Hulk Hogan as a no-nonsense rulebreaker (left) and later enforced the law when Kevin Sullivan ran amuck (below).



Rogers?" It was a reference to his days in the UWF, the last time he was known as Big Bubba Rogers.

One could almost see the light going off in Mr. Rogers' head, as if Okerlund's comment brought back something from his past. At that point, Rogers/Angel must have thought, *Bubba Rogers could get me back on track.*

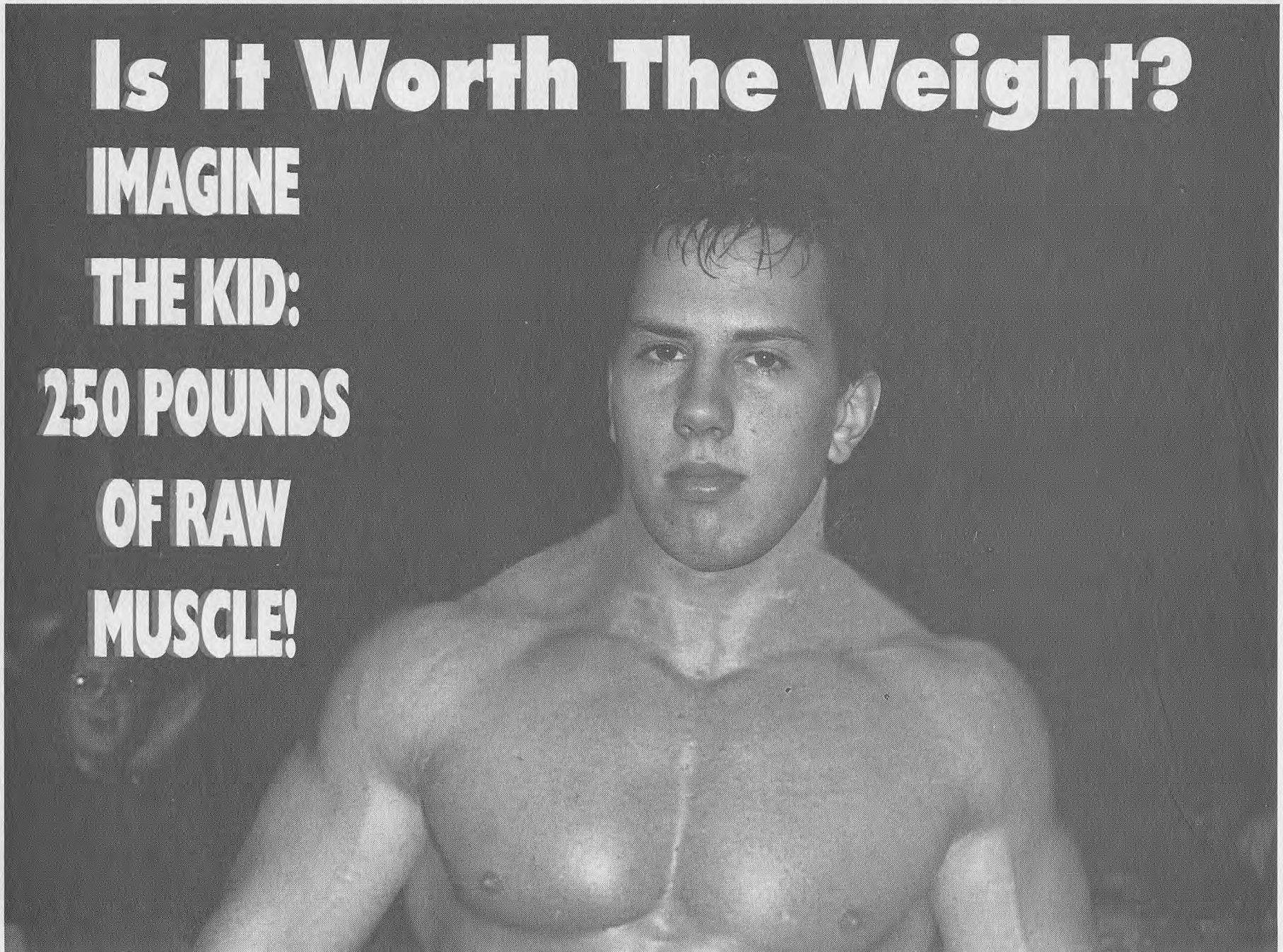
Sadly, that's not true. Mr. Rogers needs counseling, therapy, guidance, and patience. Perhaps he needs some rest. Most of all, he needs something positive to occur in his career. For the time being, he is banking on chance. □

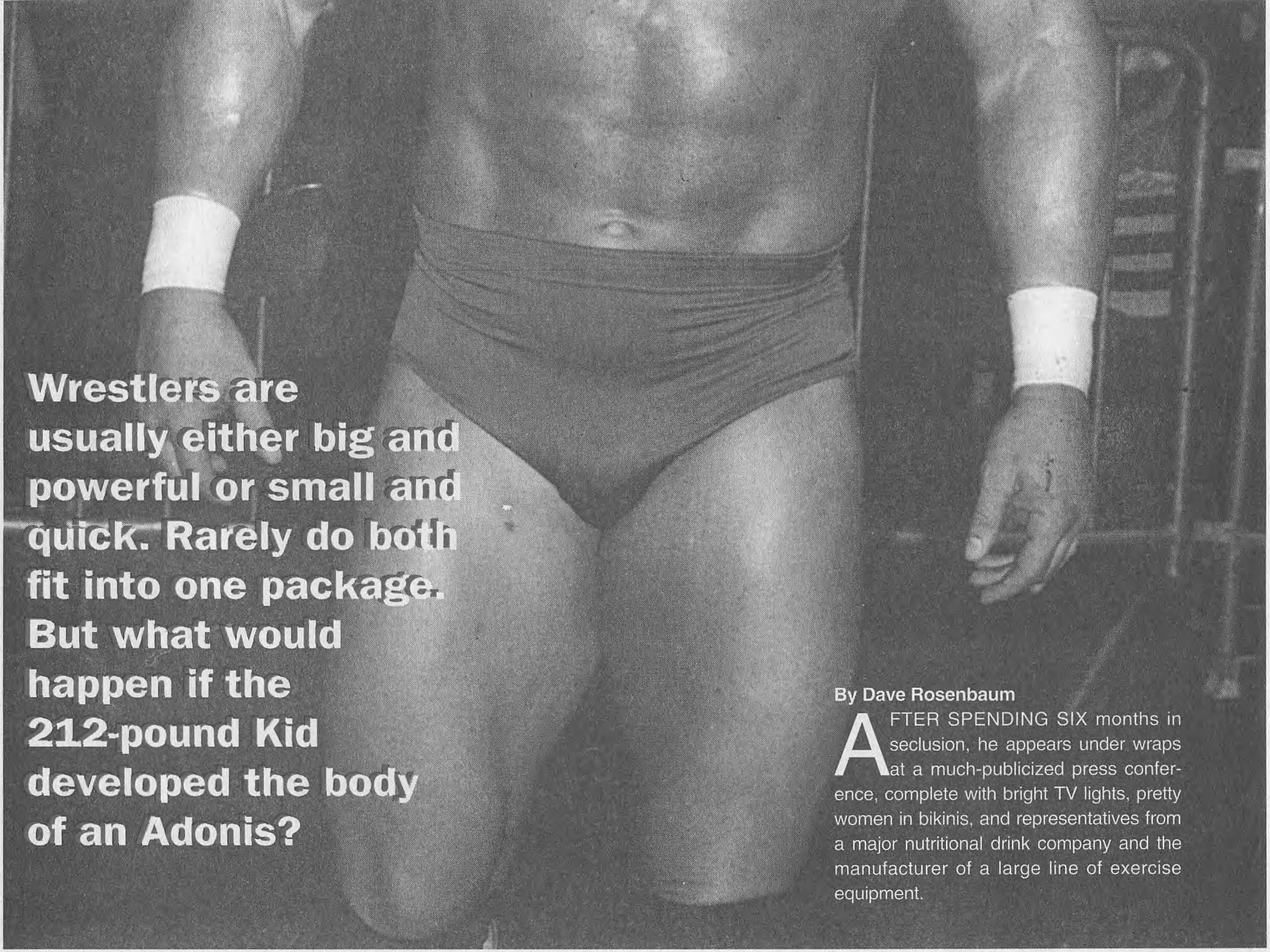


This is what Rogers meant when he said he wanted to get back to his roots. As Bubba Rogers in 1987, he was your basic brawler, taking on the likes of Michael Hayes. Basil suggests he get counseling, or risk further identity problems.

Is It Worth The Weight?

IMAGINE THE KID: 250 POUNDS OF RAW MUSCLE!

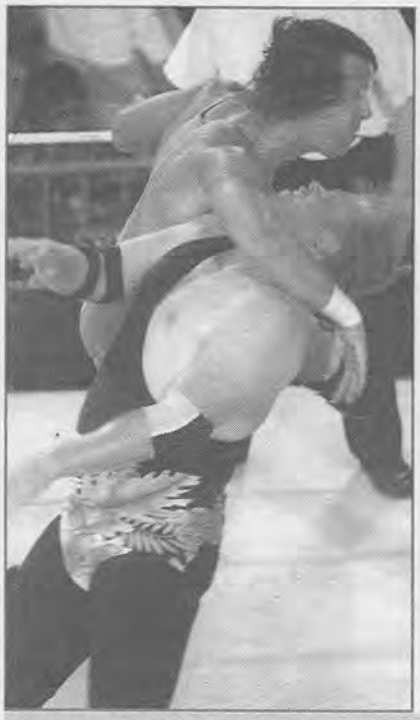




Wrestlers are usually either big and powerful or small and quick. Rarely do both fit into one package. But what would happen if the 212-pound Kid developed the body of an Adonis?

By Dave Rosenbaum

AFTER SPENDING SIX months in seclusion, he appears under wraps at a much-publicized press conference, complete with bright TV lights, pretty women in bikinis, and representatives from a major nutritional drink company and the manufacturer of a large line of exercise equipment.



An extra 40 or 50 pounds of muscle would make The Kid's clothesline (above left) a lot stronger. At 250 pounds or so, however, he wouldn't be able to get as much height on his dropkick (above right), one of his most effective moves.

The crowd of media and VIPs is anxiously awaiting the start of the press conference. Off to one side, WWF head Vince McMahon is smiling broadly, anticipating the publicity he will get from what will be revealed today. This is a day unlike any other for the federation or the fitness industry. Today, the power of positive bodyshaping will be proven.

Nobody, except those involved, is aware of the subject of the press conference. The general consensus is that a major new star will be introduced, or perhaps Hulk Hogan will be reintroduced, but what's confusing everybody is the unusual mix of marketing people present. What's going on here?

Kid struggles to take Hakushi down with a belly-to-back suplex. Frankly, he lacks the strength to execute this move as well as some wrestlers with more arm strength.

Finally, McMahon approaches the podium and the crowd quiets.

"Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for coming today," he begins. "Today is unquestionably a great day for the WWF and the companies participating in this experiment. We have spent the last six months turning man into superman, hero into superhero, wrestler into legend. We have taken a 212-pound human and, using the most advanced techniques available, transformed him into a 250-pound mass of muscle and aggression.

"Ladies and gentlemen, I give you The Kid."

A blue curtain pulls off to one side, and the spotlight shines on an impressive figure. The crowd reacts with a mixture of admiration and astonishment. It is, indeed, The Kid, but he looks nothing like The Kid people used to know. Instead of being built like a stick-figure, he is bulging with muscles. His arms and legs are massive, but well-defined. He proudly shows off his washboard stomach.

And, as the crowd takes in this incredible sight, McMahon continues, "What you see here was achieved with hard work, proper diet, and the finest, most modern exercise equipment available anywhere in the world. We have built the perfect wrestler by taking a man with incredible skills and adding strength and power to his package.

"You, my friends, will judge the results!"

***

Six months later, The Kid is standing by himself in an empty room at Joe Louis Arena. Outside, WrestleMania XII is getting underway, and The Kid is set to wrestle

WWF World champion Shawn Michaels in the main event. But as he stares at himself in the mirror, The Kid is wondering whether this so-called grand experiment has really worked.

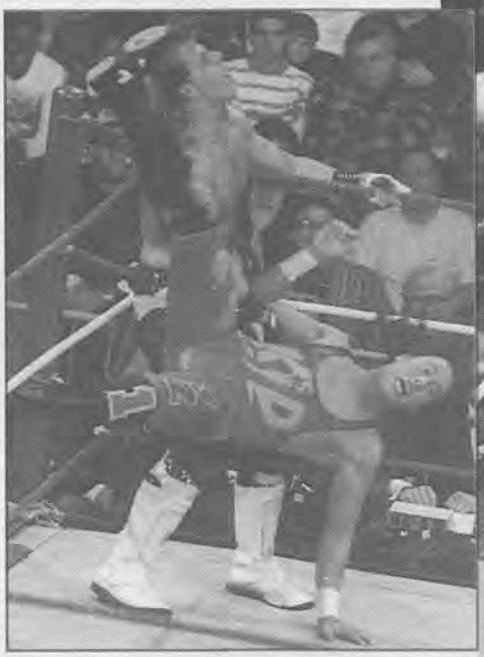
You don't beat a man like Michaels by overpowering him, he thinks. *You beat him with what I once had: agility and speed. Those people took away my speed and replaced it with all this useless bulk. It's my fault. I shouldn't have let them do it.*

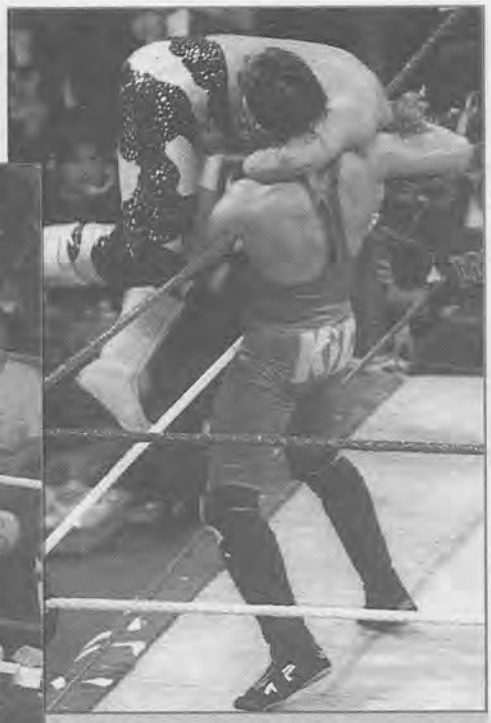
The past six months haven't been easy for The Kid. At first, fans were fascinated by his new appearance and eager to see what the new Kid would do. He really seemed to be the perfect wrestler, the first who could combine high-risk aerial and scientific moves with unbelievable power. Just imagine a moonsault-clothesline-dropkick-powerslam combination.

The experiment worked at first. Opponents weren't sure how to deal with the new Kid and basically sat back, waiting for him to do whatever he wanted. The luck of the draw was his at the 1996 Royal Rumble; he was the last man into the ring. He lasted all of five minutes and earned a spot in the WWF World title match at WrestleMania.

But things went downhill fast for The Kid in February and March. It started at a card in Philadelphia one night when he launched a flying bodypress at Bam Bam Bigelow from the turnbuckles and came up about a foot short of his target. One week later, he tried a dropkick combination on Adam Bomb, but couldn't achieve enough height to do more than kick Bomb's chest. And it was another two weeks later, during a match against Owen Hart, that The Kid realized he had lost some of stamina.

Sure, it wasn't getting in the way of his social life. All of a sudden, Kid was swamped with attention from women wherever he went. This relatively scrawny 212-pounder suddenly was the most sought-after wrestler in the WWF. And they didn't care that a moonsault he attempted against Bigelow had nearly cost him his life. With Hart standing on the arena floor, The Kid tried the move from inside the ring. It wasn't any different from hundreds he had successfully executed before, but this time, he came up well short of his target. Only his legs grazed Owen's prone body. His head nearly smashed into the arena floor.



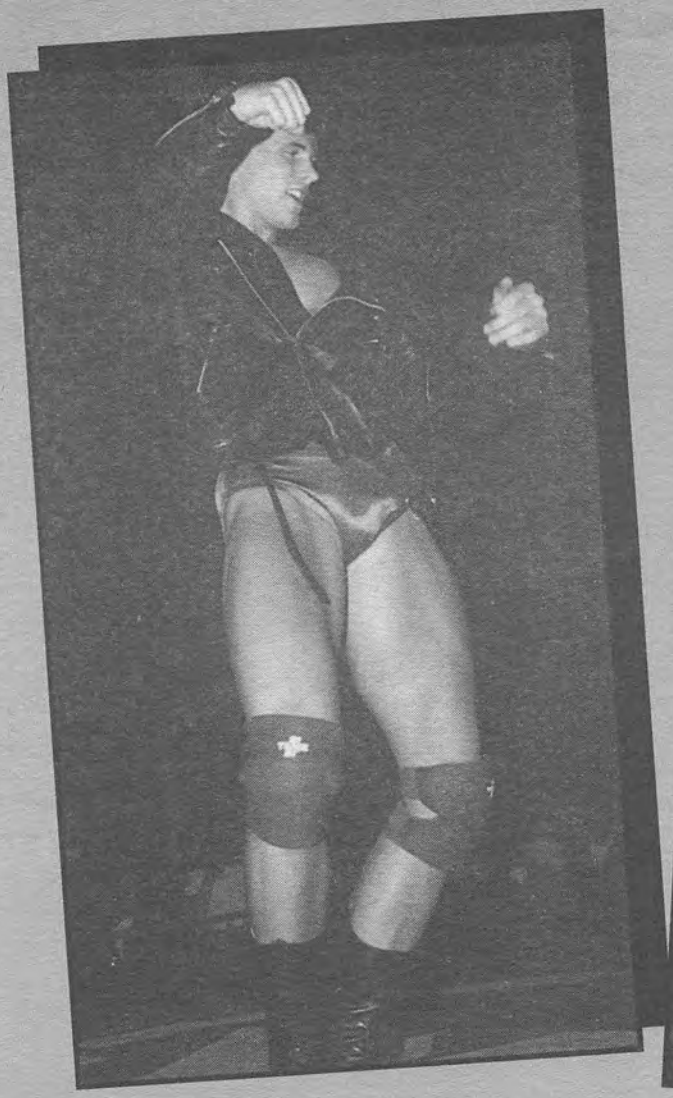


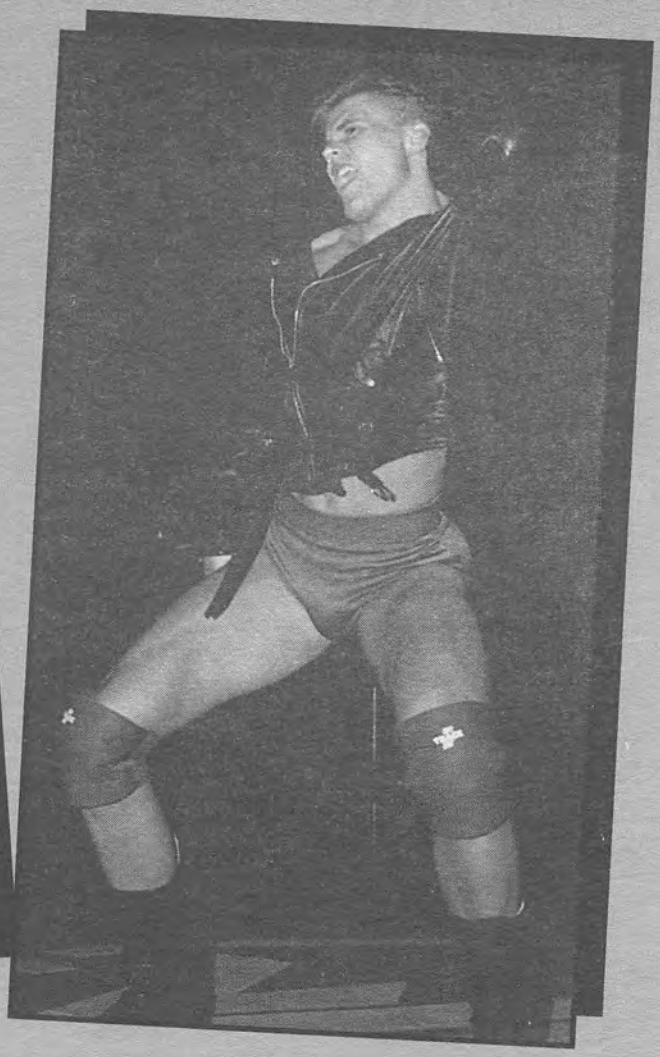
It took every ounce of Kid's strength for him to suplex Shawn Michaels (above). That shouldn't worry him. Few wrestlers have a spinning savate kick as good as his (left). Even fewer have the agility and courage to execute flying bodypresses over the top rope (below).

That was no way to head into the biggest match of his career at WrestleMania. So, as The Kid stood in this room and reflected upon the past year, he realized that what he had was good enough. Sure, maybe he wasn't good enough to win the World title, but he certainly was better then he is now.

With that in mind, The Kid walked out of the room and past the entrance to the runway. A WWF official called after him, but The Kid kept walking. He exited through another door, walked out into the sunlight, and got into his car.

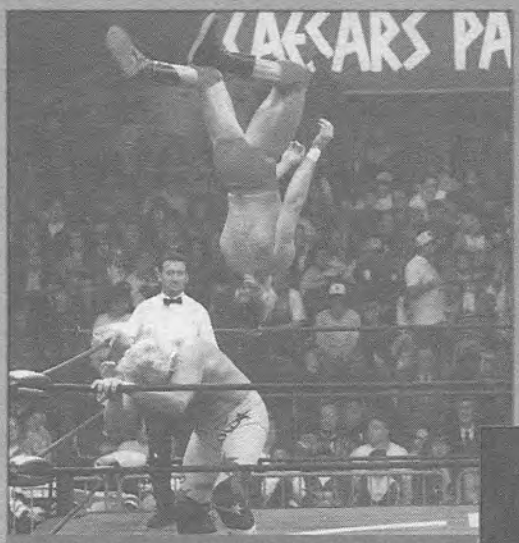
He would return to the WWF exactly six months later. □





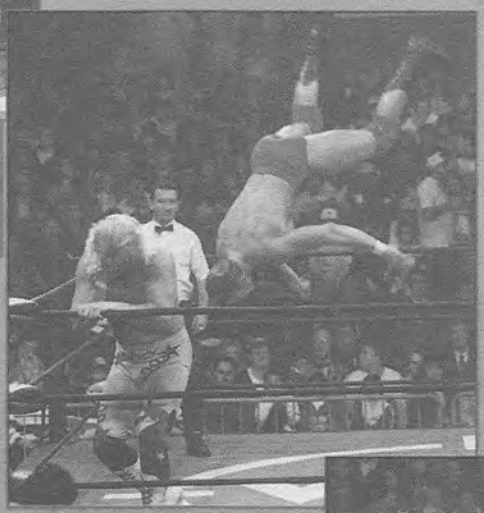
ALEX WRIGHT HAS *ALL* THE MOVES ...

And Some Of Them Are *During* The Match!



Alex Wright is particularly proud of his back-flip. He often uses it as a great method of escape. When Bobby Eaton charged after him in the corner, he leaped to the top rope and hurtled himself over.

Teen sensation Alex Wright has traveled from halfway across the world and turned WCW upside down with his matinee-idol looks, come-on dances, and, oh, yeah, his wrestling

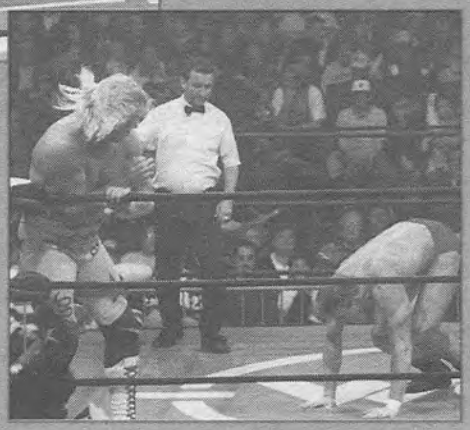


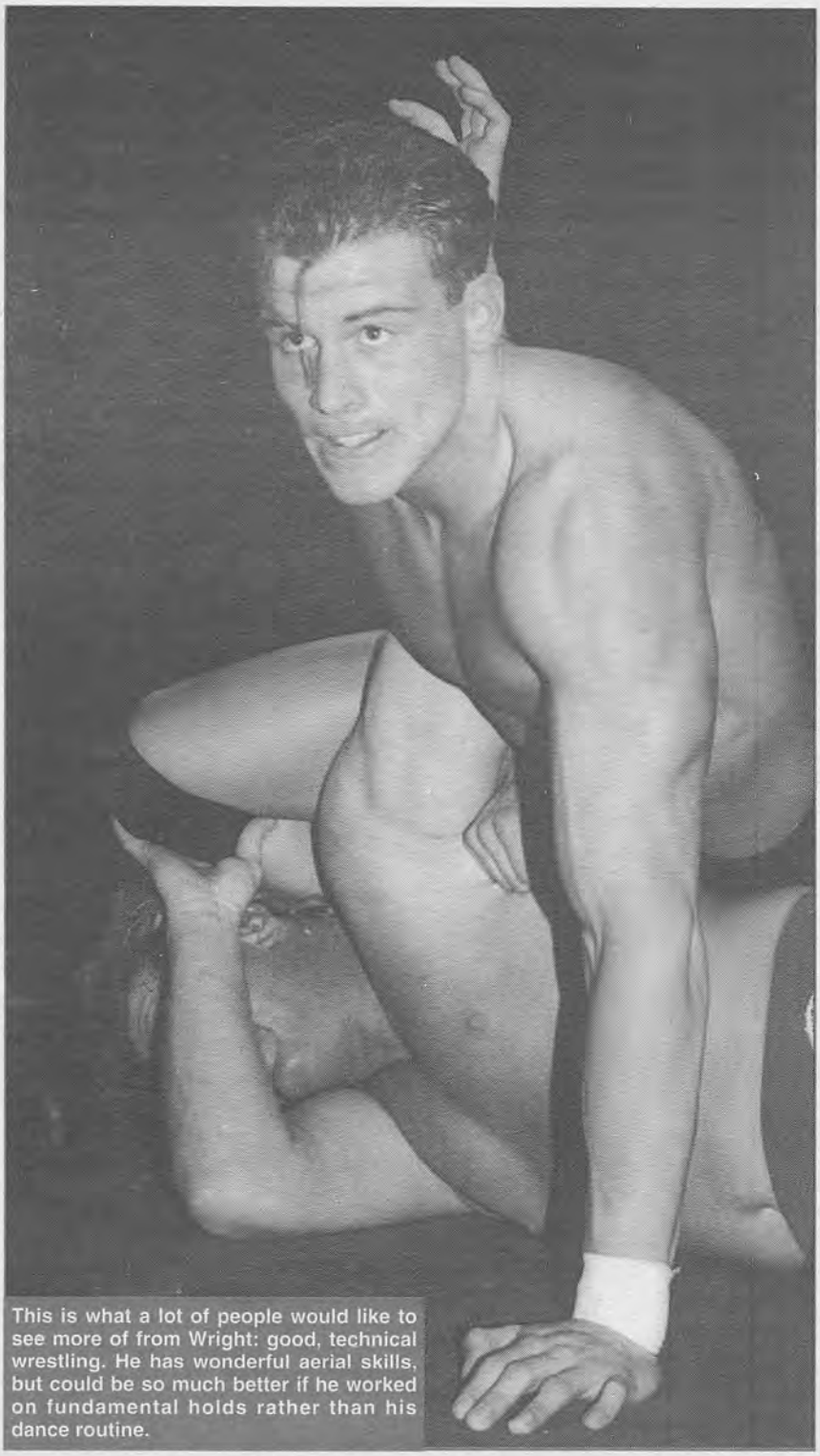
By Chris Bernucca

TEENAGE GIRLS SCREAM when he enters the arena and approaches the runway leading to the ring. He is young, foreign, and good-looking, and he knows it. The spotlight finds him, and he breaks into a hip-gyrating performance that would make Elvis blush.

The act begins, and the performer is as good as advertised. There is almost nothing he cannot do. The moves he displays upon his entrance are nothing compared to the ones in his actual act. When the performance is over, he acknowledges the cheers from the crowd and gives them another shake of his hips. Then he departs, taking his act to another arena with more young screaming girls and bigger spotlights.

The latest musical star from across the pond? No, silly, it's





This is what a lot of people would like to see more of from Wright: good, technical wrestling. He has wonderful aerial skills, but could be so much better if he worked on fundamental holds rather than his dance routine.

Alex Wright, the most refreshing thing to happen to wrestling since brightly colored spandex.

"He's a breath of fresh air," said one WCW executive. "We're lucky to have found him."

"He's the hottest!" said one 15-year-old female fan. "I want him!"

"He's a phony," said Kevin Sullivan. "Who needs him?"

Before we get to what's right about Alex Wright, we should probably discuss what's wrong. Many veteran wrestlers—most of them rulebreakers—are put off by Wright's antics. Most of them would not speak on the record, but one did.

"He's a sideshow, not a wrestler," said the normally reticent Bobby Eaton, a veteran rulebreaker. "He looks like one of those Chippendales dancer in one of those male-stripper clubs. There's no place for that stuff in a wrestling ring. I don't like it at all."

Perhaps Eaton doesn't like Wright because he has had a lot of trouble beating him. The two have faced each other in WCW venues across North America and in Europe, with Wright emerging victorious on each occasion. That may be a tough pill to swallow for Eaton, a former champion who is being beaten by someone half his age.

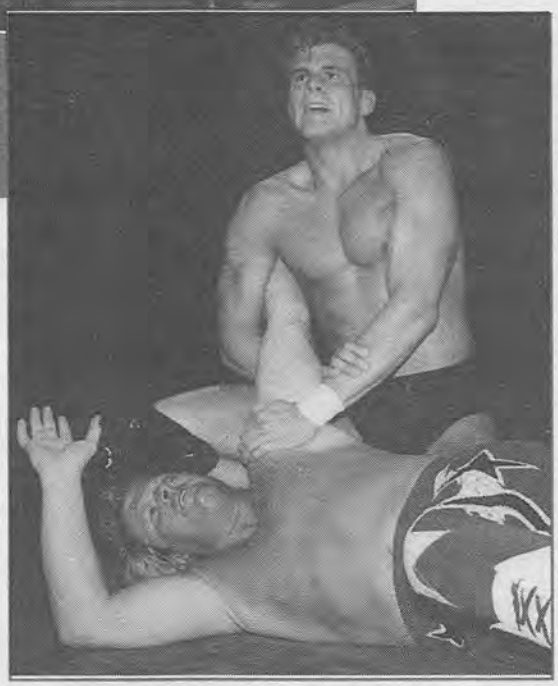
Wright, who was born in Germany, is just 18 years old and looks even younger. One observer joked that his appearances on cable station TBS should be limited to cameos on *Saved By The Bell*, a big hit among the 13-and-under crowd.

"Is this a show about wrestling?" Wright asked when told of the joke. "I am new to America and I do not know of all of your cultures. But American wrestling I like very much. And the women! Very friendly. Also very pretty."

Wright has had several encounters with the women of whom he speaks so highly. At Center Stage Theater in Atlanta, he is mobbed by groups of young ladies every time he makes his way to the ring. Female fans simply have to get a closer look at "Das Wunderkind," which has become Wright's nickname.

The moniker fits. Once the bell rings, Wright is a sight to behold. He has already supplanted Brian Pillman as the best aerial wrestler in WCW. Even as a tender

Wright took care of Jean-Paul LeVeque at Starrcade '94 (above). So far, however, LeVeque, also an inexperienced youngster, and Eaton (right), a veteran past his prime, are the best wrestlers he has beaten. He has yet to challenge WCW's best.



teenager, his flying skills rank among the best aerial wrestlers in the world, including those from Mexico and Japan. Wright is nimble and light and has terrific balance. His best maneuver is a backflip executed from the top rope. He gets tremendous height on the leap and remains in the air for several seconds before crashing down to the mat.

"I have worked on the backflip for many years," said Wright. "It is part of me now."

However, Wright wouldn't say how long he has worked on his dance routine, which has become somewhat annoying. As a foreigner who is new to the sport, he may be unaware that men like Rick Rude and Shawn Michaels have alienated millions of American fans with their choreographed ring entrances and incessant gyrations. While some of the women may love it, his colleagues have yet to acquire a taste for Wright's prematch posturing.

"This is what happens when you let Hulk Hogan in your federation," said manager Harley Race, a purist in every sense of the word. "Every gymnastics class dropout with an ego thinks he can be a wrestler. When he's lying on the canvas with a broken back, nobody's going to think he looks good."

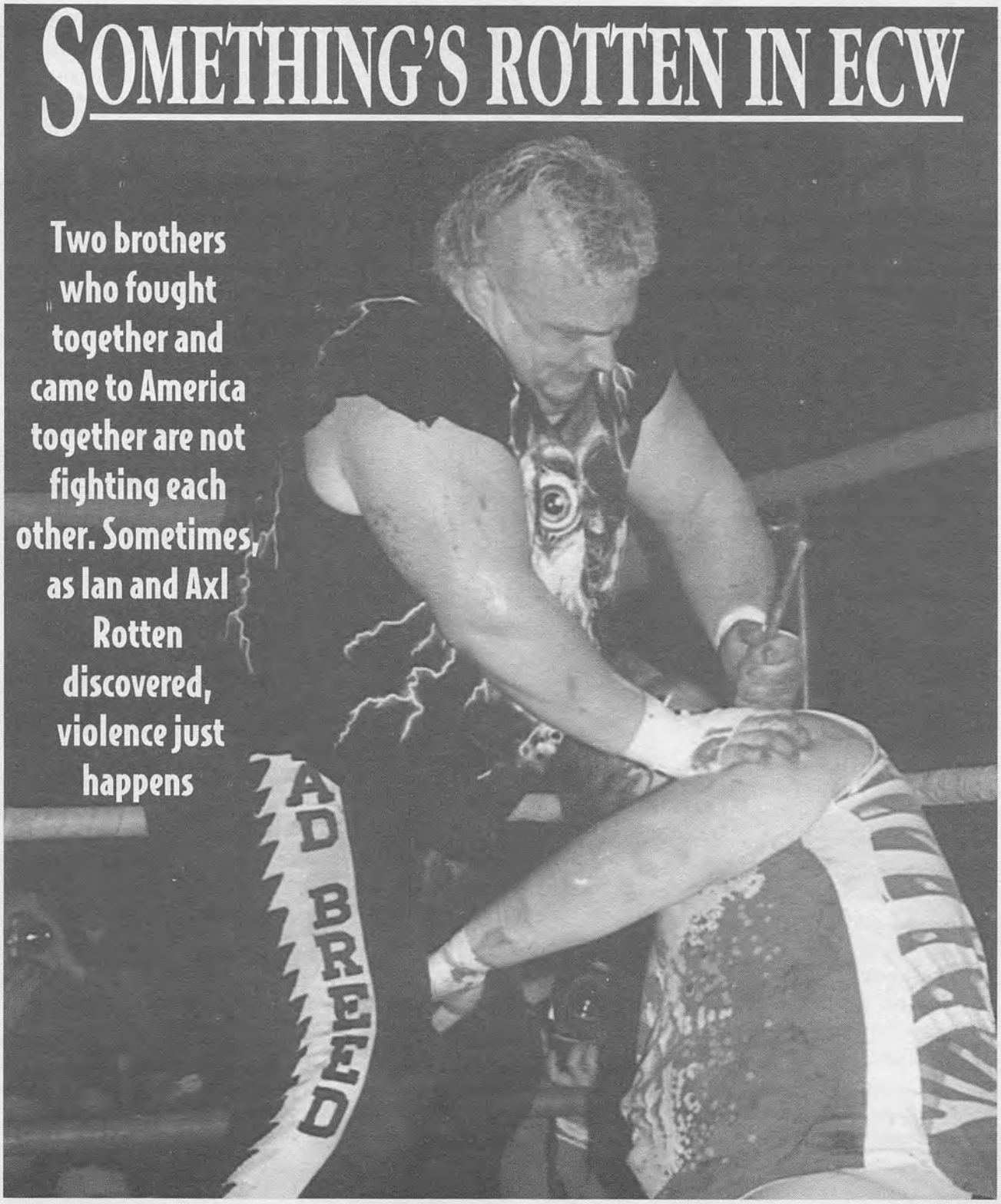
It would be easy to dismiss Wright if he were a gymnastics class dropout. But with the ego comes considerable skills at a remarkably young age. At 18, Wright is still three years away from his first legal drink in this country. But unlike most teenagers in America, he is not actively seeking fake identification. Instead, his goal is to become the youngest world champion in the history of the sport.

"He has a shot," offered veteran broadcaster Gordon Solie. "Lou Thesz was 20 when he became NWA World champion. So Alex has a couple of years to reach that goal. But there's a lot of distractions for an 18-year-old foreigner in America. He's having a lot of fun right now, but staying focused will indeed be his toughest challenge."

Wright could take a big step in that direction if he were to tone down his prematch antics. He often appears to put more energy and concentration into his ritualistic dance than the match itself. The great ones in this sport are able to put aside the distractions and concentrate on becoming the best they can be. For all the excitement he is creating, it would be nice to see Wright behave beyond his years and take that step toward greatness. Because if he doesn't, his next television appearance may be on *Star Search*. □

When Brother Turns

SOMETHING'S ROTTEN IN ECW



Two brothers who fought together and came to America together are not fighting each other. Sometimes, as Ian and Axl Rotten discovered, violence just happens

Against Brother ...

By Dave Rosenbaum

AXL ROTTEN SLAMMED down the receiver for the third time, but wasted no time picking it up and hitting redial.

"Busy again. Damn. I wonder who she's talking to," he said.

He dialed again. Busy. One more time. Busy.

"Here, take this," Rotten demanded, handing the phone to his guest. "Keep hitting redial. I have to go to the water closet."

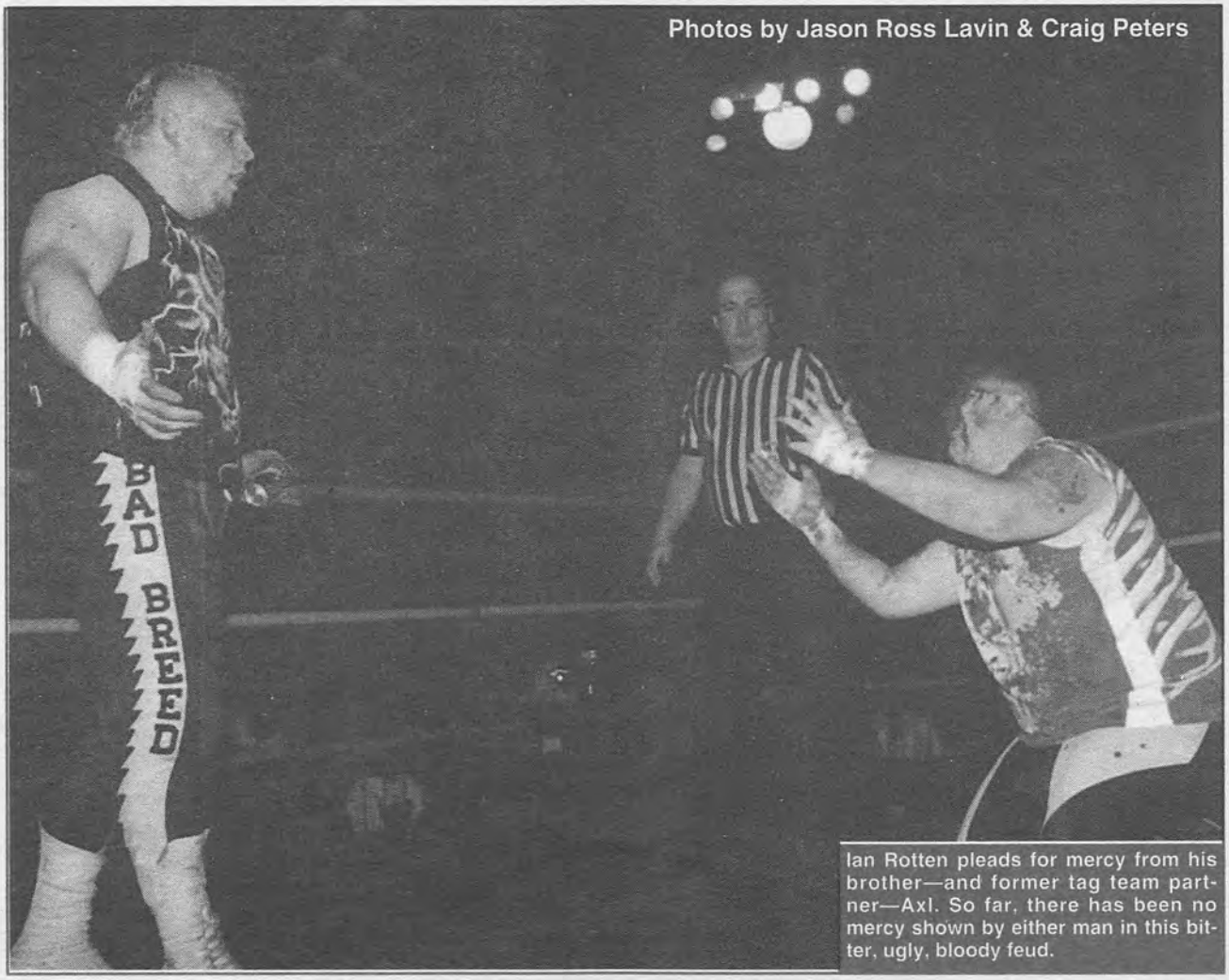
Less than a minute later, Axl Rotten shouted from behind the door, "Did she answer yet?" Still no answer. Finally, after 45 minutes, the call went through, and the look on Axl Rotten's face said there was an answer.

"Hello, Mum, it's your son," Axl said. "Yeah, I've been trying to get a hold of you for hours. Who you been talking to?"

Rotten's expression suddenly changed drastically. Something was wrong.

"Ian? What were you talking to Ian for?" Axl asked, the agitation building in his voice. "He's got nothing to say."

The phone call lasted only another minute before Axl Rotten slammed the receiver onto the carriage once again. His face had turned beet red and beads of sweat had formed on his forehead. "I want to know what he's saying to her," he shouted. "He's trying to put her



Photos by Jason Ross Lavin & Craig Peters

Ian Rotten pleads for mercy from his brother—and former tag team partner—Axl. So far, there has been no mercy shown by either man in this bitter, ugly, bloody feud.

Axl takes aim at Ian's head with—of all things—a cookie sheet. If their poor mother could see what has happened to these two brothers, she would be appalled!

in the middle again, I just know it!"

Rotten sat down in an old chair and didn't say anything for 10 minutes. Finally, he got up, walked over to the phone, and dialed another number.

"The answering machine," Axl spat. "The dirty, stinkin' answering machine. Well, I'll tell it what's on my mind.

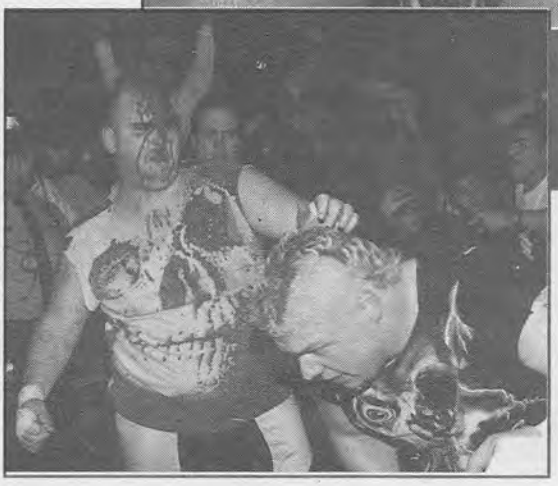
"Ian, this is your former brother, Axl, and I don't want you filling my mother's ears with any of your garbage. Don't you go telling her I'm the reason we're not talking anymore. And don't bother calling me back. I'll have something to say to you the next time we meet in the ring."

The next time Ian and Axl rotten met in the ring, the two brothers from Newcastle, England, tore into each other like a soldier from the Irish Republican Army would tear into a member of the British Parliament. By the end of the match, there was blood all over the mat, and it was Rotten blood. There were pieces of skin hanging from the ropes, and it was Rotten skin. Frying pans, chairs, a bell, and a soda can were among the assorted weapons of choice in that ugly bout.

In Extreme Championship Wrestling, where a menu of violence is proudly advertised, Ian and Axl Rotten presented a smorgasbord of horror.

And to think: Not too long ago, these men were as close as brothers could be.

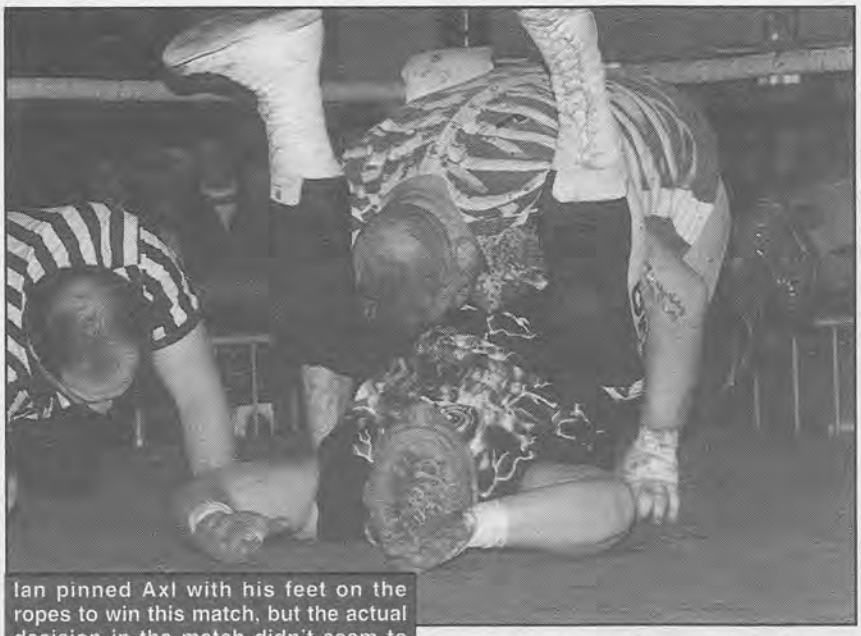
The battle between Ian and Axl Rotten makes the War of the Harts look like a softball game at the family picnic. Kevin Sullivan vs. Dave Sullivan pales in comparison. The Gilberts, Eddie and Doug, never dreamed about hurting each other this badly.



Ian's face was a sea of blood minutes into the match (above); many people were happy to see that after Ian shamelessly turned against his brother. But a little blood didn't stop him from continuing his assault (left).

ECW is hosting a feud so violent that it could only occur between two men who used to love each other. Or still do.

The brothers Rotten, who came



Ian pinned Axl with his feet on the ropes to win this match, but the actual decision in the match didn't seem to matter much to either man. They're both bent on destroying each other at all costs!

all the way from Newcastle several years ago to wreak havoc on North American wrestling, have turned their attention to destroying themselves.

Their beloved, hard-working mother would slap their faces and send them to bed without supper if she could see what was going on. Fortunately for her, she's too far away from the brotherly carnage, and the Queen of England has no jurisdiction over ECW's bloody Rotten mess.

"He's the reason we're not together anymore," said Ian, launching another venomous attack on his brother. "He made the mistake that cost us our careers together. I can't believe a brother of mine could be so stupid and reckless."

The Rotten War started on January 7 at ECW Arena in Philadelphia. What was supposed to be the culmination of a feud between Bad Breed—the name Ian and Axl gave to their tag team—and The Pit Bulls turned out to be the opening battle between the Rottens. It was a "losing-tag-team-must-split-up" match and all indications were that Bad Breed would be the team to stay together.

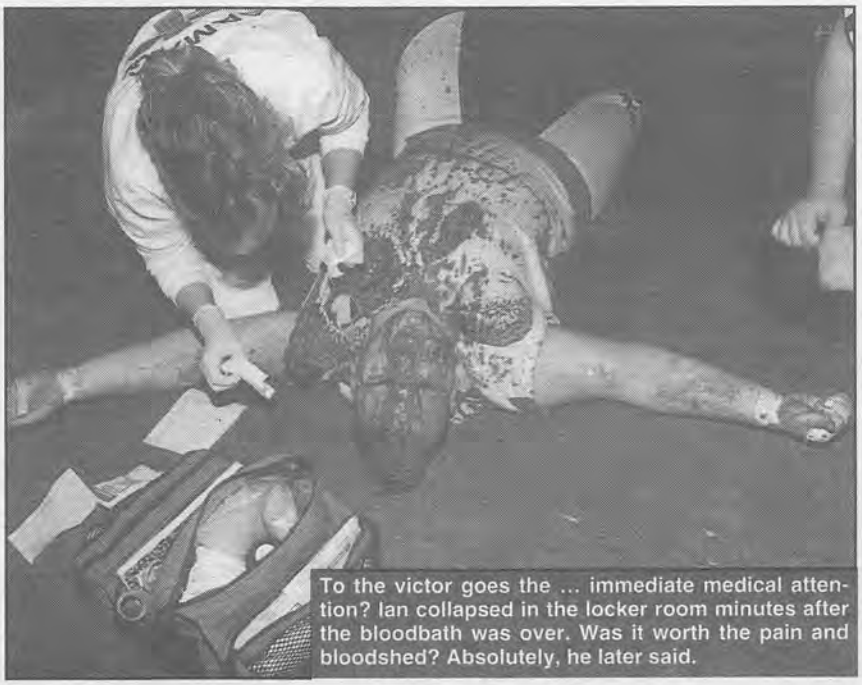
Chains, frying pans, a cookie sheet, and a hockey stick were flying in this violent match, and all four wrestlers were worn down. Ian, sensing victory, lifted Pit Bull I onto the turnbuckle to finish him off, but was stunned when Pit Bull I reversed it into a sensational "Frankensteiner" for the pin. Axl actually turned his back on the fray, figuring his brother had the match won.

As the brothers left the ring arm-in-arm, Ian suddenly began tearing into Axl. After dragging Axl back to the ring and pummeling him, he left his stunned brother lying in the middle of the mat in a pool of his own sweat and blood. The crowd couldn't believe what had happened. Neither could The Pit Bulls. Not only had they destroyed Bad Breed, they destroyed the relationship between Axl and Ian. They couldn't have been happier.

Axl couldn't have been more shocked.

"I can't believe my own brother would turn against me like that," Axl said. "We were always close. That's why we decided to come here together. But he was always jealous of me and saying things that weren't true. I wish I'd known he felt this way. I would've left him in Newcastle."

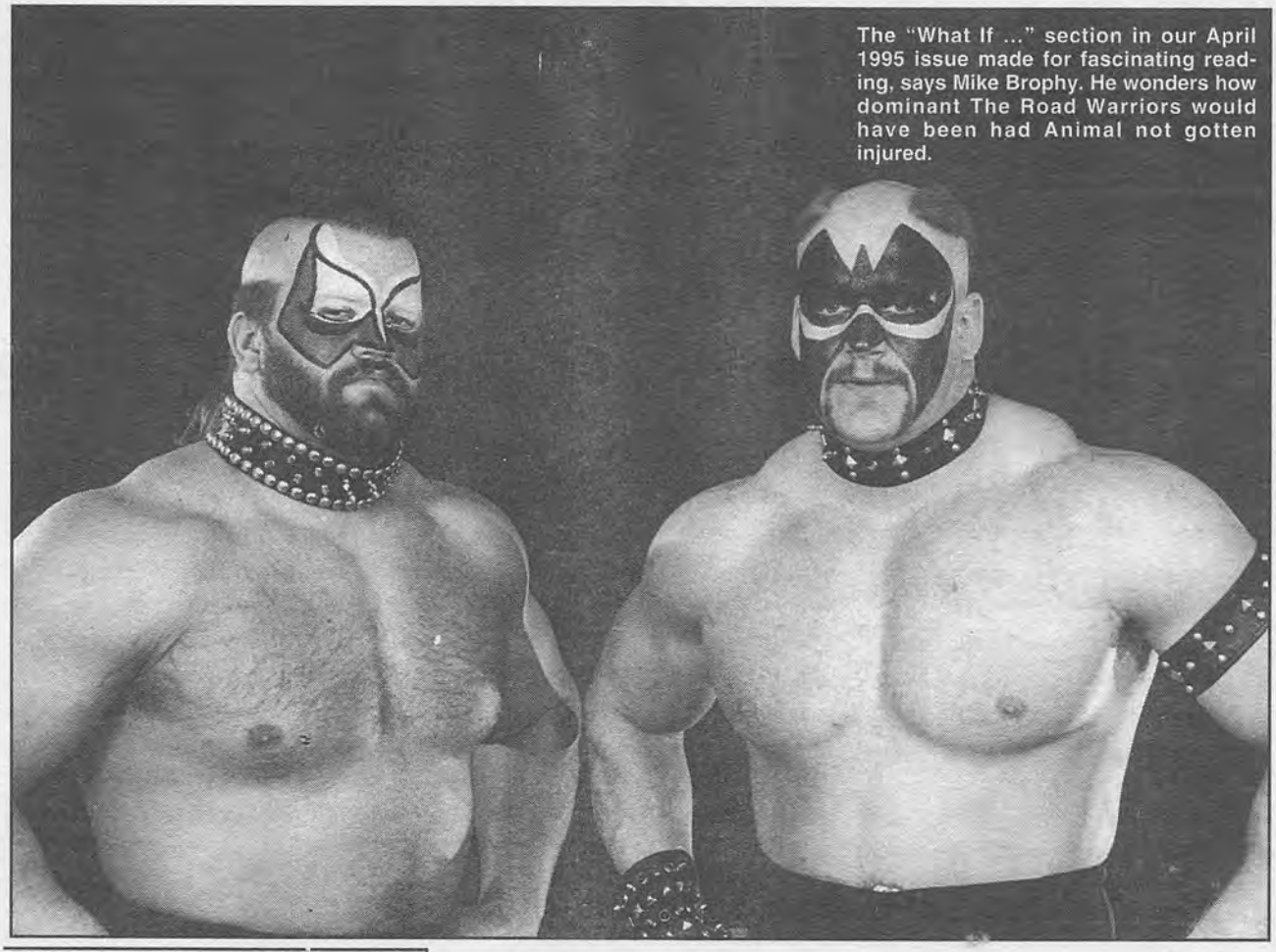
It's too late. Bad Breed is gone, but Ian and Axl Rotten are fighting on. The match stipulation that January night was for the losing tag team to break up. But the breakup went much too far. □



To the victor goes the ... immediate medical attention? Ian collapsed in the locker room minutes after the bloodbath was over. Was it worth the pain and bloodshed? Absolutely, he later said.

YOUR LETTERS

(Continued from page 5)



The "What If ..." section in our April 1995 issue made for fascinating reading, says Mike Brophy. He wonders how dominant The Road Warriors would have been had Animal not gotten injured.

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has long been a part of the sport. He was not one to care about titles or fame; He just enjoyed what he was doing. Gilbert did hold his share of belts, but they were only mere materialistic manifestations of what he already knew to be true. Gilbert was a champion in his heart and soul. The wrestling world will be a much less bloodier place without him, and that is our loss.

ARLENE ENDERS
Los Angeles

WHAT IF... ?

Your "What If...?" section (April 1995) brought up some very interesting points about wrestling. The questions that were addressed have made my friends and me think about where the sport would be today if many other events hadn't occurred. There are many points in the history of wrestling that come to mind when an open question like "What if...?" is asked.

For instance, what if Animal of The Road Warriors had never gotten hurt? What if Bruiser Brody wasn't murdered? What if Jim Crockett didn't sell his promotion to Ted Turner? What if Cyndi Lauper had not become involved in wrestling?

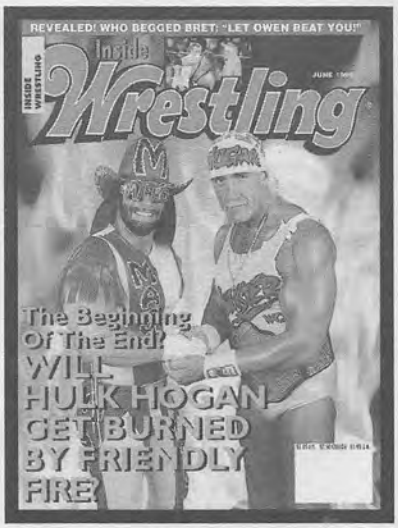
These and more questions can be asked about wrestling history. It is interesting to think of all that might have happened if fate had just turned the other way. Maybe the whole state of wrestling would be different. At least it makes for some great, deep conversations.

MIKE BROPHY
Tulsa, OK

(Continued on page 70)

this month in...

Inside Wrestling



RANDY SAVAGE dropped a flying elbowsmash on **HULK HOGAN** to wake him up at the Clash in January. Was it the beginning of an inevitable feud? … **HELEN HART** tells her son **BRET** to let his brother **OWEN** beat him. Will Bret listen to her? And what does **STU HART** think? … **JACK TUNNEY** *must* strip **JEFF JARRETT** of the Intercontinental title now! … **STEVE AUSTIN** was supposed to be out for most of 1995 with a knee injury, but he's already back. Is his career in jeopardy?

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2732/08-94

YOUR LETTERS

(Continued from page 68)

Kwang and his amazing savate kicks have impressed reader Eric Hodges, who says the martial arts expert should dump Harvey Wippleman and get a real manager.

MOUTHING OFF

Reading the transcript of the prematch strategy session between Jerry Lawler and Jim Cornette was hilarious! ("Outrageous! The Lawler-Cornette Meeting Of The Mouths," April 1995) I didn't think they would be so cruel when talking about "Dirty White Boy" Tony Anthony or his valet, "Dirty White Girl" Kimberly. Cornette and Lawler are wisecracking loudmouths, but I thought they might actually be a little more subdued when they are away from the ring. Boy, was I wrong!

Also, I thought a strategy session for a match in a championship tournament would be more serious. Maybe it is for some others, but these two clowns just joked around too much. No wonder Lawler lost his match to Anthony by disqualification—he didn't prepare enough to get a pinfall for the victory.

ALICIA TAYLOR
Kitchener, Ontario

BACKING KWANG

For a year or so now, I have been following the WWF career of Kwang. Despite what some people say, I think this man is a true talent. His martial arts skills are better than anyone else's in the WWF, and his spinning savate kicks are exciting to watch. He executes those kinds of kicks better than The Kid and Shawn Michaels, if you ask me.

I also remember seeing him beat Kid cleanly several times. I think the reason he isn't progressing much is his manager, Harvey Wippleman. Wippleman offers very little guidance to his wrestlers, and a lot of times I think Kwang looks confused in the ring. I would like to see Kwang hire a manager like Mr. Fuji or Jim Cornette. If he did, his career would really take off!

ERIC HODGES
St. Paul, MN ☐

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March 1991

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WHAT'S HAPPENING

(Continued from page 7)

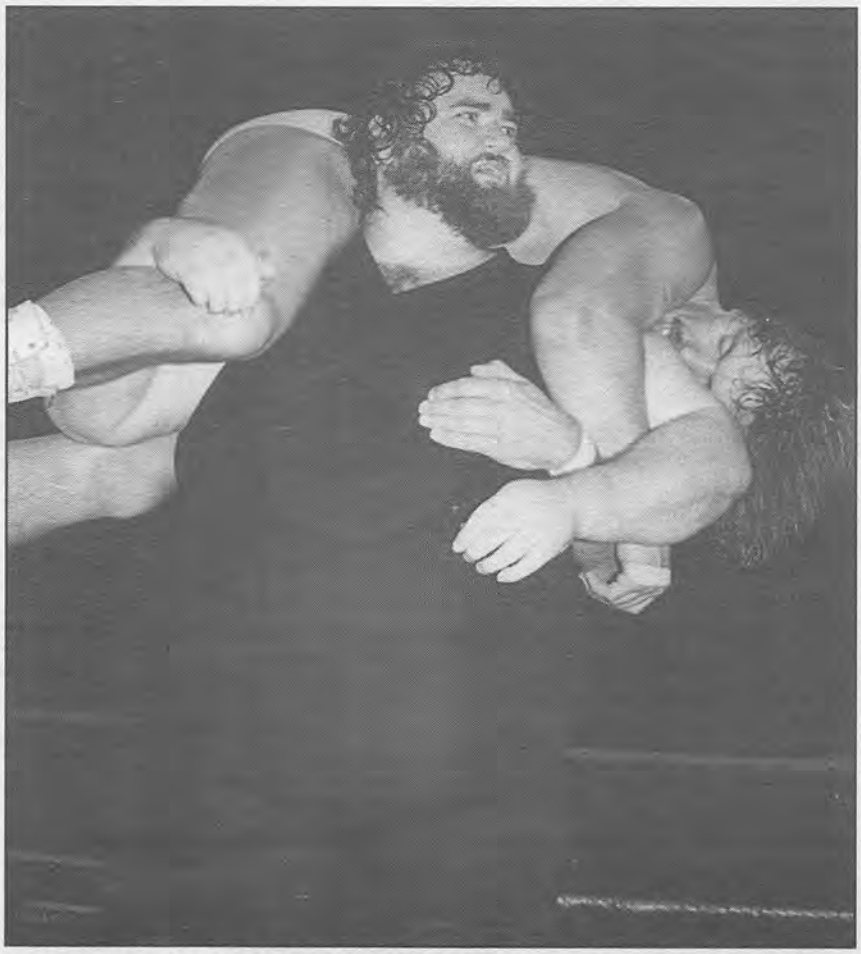
All-Pro Wrestling heavyweight champion Chainz is demanding to be recognized for his greatness. He thinks "bums" like Hulk Hogan and Big Van Vader get too much attention.

book recently that wrestling fans might enjoy. It's called *Goldmine's Celebrity Vocals*. It includes a list of many of the obscure recordings put out by various celebrities and sports heroes (including wrestlers). It was written by **Ron Lofman** and is published by Krause Publications ... **Dave Sullivan** says sooner or later, he will win a date with **Dallas Page's "Diamond Doll"** and "treat her so well that she will never want to go back with him!" Sullivan will get the date if he can beat Page in an arm-wrestling match.

Great Lakes Wrestling Association promoters have signed a series of matches between **Jake "The Snake" Roberts** and **Terry Taylor**. Taylor had been semi-retired from active competition and was focusing on broadcasting. "I want to get back into action now," he reported. "Jake Roberts and I have had some unsettled issues for several years, and it's time to resolve them."

The feud between **Axl** and **Ian Rotten** has broken out of ECW; they're now tearing each other up in ACW rings as well ... **"Jungle" Jim Steele** (remember his brief stint in WCW?) is feuding with **Kamala** in ASW rings ... **Steve Richards**, who is managed by **"The Raven," Scotty Flamingo**, told me is looking for "recognition for our good looks." Flamingo added, "You've never seen two perfect men such as us in this sport."

It saddens me to have to report the death of **Jerry "Crusher" Blackwell**. Blackwell, who was only 45, died on January 22 in a hospital in Atlanta. He had been in an automobile accident in late-December, and his health had gradually deteriorated since. Blackwell died of complications from pneumonia. He is survived by his wife, **Nellie**, four children, 13 grandchildren, and one great-grandchild. If you ever saw Blackwell in action, you know he was the 1980s version of Big Van Vader in the way that he executed aerial maneuvers. Blackwell, who weighed 464 pounds in his prime, held the AWA tag team title with **Ken Patera** in 1983-84, and also won the Missouri State title in 1983. □



Wrestling lost one of its all-time greats in January when Jerry "Crusher" Blackwell died. A star in the AWA, NWA, and the WWF, Blackwell was only 45 years old.

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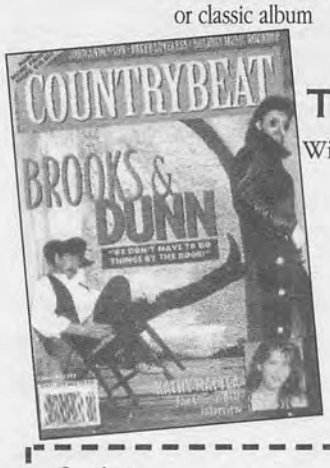

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NO HOLDS BARRED

(Continued from page 8)

blame the Simpson family for murdering their daughter. Nor can the Simpson family blame the Brown family for bringing charges against O.J.; it's a government case.

But almost every day since last June, members of the Brown family have publicly accused O.J. Simpson of being a murderer, a wife batterer, and a stalker. If Simpson is convicted, there's a good chance Denise Brown's emotional testimony will have been a deciding factor.

If I were a member of the Simpson family, you'd better believe I'd never again speak with or even look at a member of the Brown family. Not that the Simpsons are right and the Browns are wrong, or the Browns right and the Simpsons wrong. This is a matter of family loyalty.

Back in October, it looked like the lifelong friendship between Hulk Hogan and Brutus Beefcake was destroyed. Now it appears Brutus might reconsider his decision to turn against Hogan. What's going on?

You're trying to put my son (brother, father, etc.) in jail. I hope you die before you succeed.

But the human race is not a logical one, nor is it good at sustaining grudges. We generally want to believe that people are inherently good. We want to like and be liked. We are starved for approval. Tension is a bad thing, and the tension between the Browns and Simpsons as they entered the courtroom each day must have been unbearable.

That's why they kissed and relieved the tension, even if they didn't make up.

Does it make sense? No. Do they feel better today? Probably.

Hulk Hogan was once asked why he befriended Paul Orndorff, his former enemy, who would become his future enemy.

"Because he made a promise to me, and I expected him to keep that promise," Hogan said. "How can I tell all those children out there to do the right thing and then go off and do the wrong thing by not believing in somebody? If you stop believing in people, you've lost all hope."

Members of the Hart family are convinced that if Owen sincerely extended his hand in brotherhood, Bret would accept it and forget all about their differences.

Many divorced couples remarry.

Hulk Hogan forgave Sgt. Slaughter (even though most wrestling fans never did) for turning his back on his country during the Persian Gulf War.

Best friends argue and become best friends again.

"Dirty White Boy" Tony Anthony turns his back on the South, calls Southerners all kinds of names, makes himself an honorary Yankee, and one year later is one of the most popular wrestlers in Smoky Mountain Wrestling, which is based deep in the heart of Tennessee.

Managing Editor Dave Lenker butchers my copy, then calls me the next day begging me to accept a last-minute assignment.

Ric Flair nearly gets beheaded by Big Van Vader, then one year later voices his support for him in a championship match.

Ian and Axl Rotten will become brothers again. Bret and Owen will reunite. Kevin and Dave Sullivan will mend their wounds. Eddie and Doug Gilbert kissed and made up, fought, kissed and made up, fought again, and spent Thanksgiving together.

Fool me once, shame on you. Fool me twice, shame on me. That's how the saying goes.

Human beings don't mind being fooled three, four, six, or even a dozen times.

Human nature sets us up for disappointment, punishment, and embarrassment.

If the Browns can hug the Simpsons, anything's possible in wrestling. □

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JUNE 1994 *WRESTLER* is an 88-page spectacular featuring 20 pages of "The stuff all fans should know"—the best wrestling quiz ever! What's your wrestling IQ? Find out with this issue! Features four full-color pinups!

SEPTEMBER 1994 *WRESTLER* 88 pages of excitement—including the lively and candid "WWF Midyear Report," a review of the WWF through the first half of the year! Includes four color pinups!

WINTER 1994 *WRESTLER* includes the must-read bonus section, "Wrestling From A To Z"—an alphabetical array of wrestling trends and turmoil! Four full-color pinups complete this sensational 88-page package!

MARCH 1990 *INSIDE WRESTLING* looks back at the decade of the '80s with a dazzling eight-page full-color section and a year-by-year review of the most significant events in the sport. Must reading for all fans!

JANUARY 1993 *INSIDE WRESTLING* presents a stunning 12-page bonus full-color section covering the WWF's SummerSlam '92 extravaganza and Clash of the Champions XX.

JANUARY 1994 *INSIDE WRESTLING* offers the most extensive coverage of SummerSlam '93 and Fall Brawl anywhere: seven pages of analysis plus two pages of full-color highlights from each card!

APRIL 1994 *INSIDE WRESTLING* includes the first-ever *Inside Wrestling* computer tournament! You won't believe who wins—or how! This 88-page issue's four-page color section includes an action centerfold—from the tournament?!

JULY 1994 *INSIDE WRESTLING* includes 21 pages of one-of-a-kind prognostications as *Inside Wrestling* looks into the sport's future and reports back to you! Coverage in this 88-page issue includes a four-page pinup section!

OCTOBER 1994 *INSIDE WRESTLING* presents the bold and brassy "WCW Midyear Report," a 15-page overview of the first half of 1994. Four full-color pinups fill out this 88-page special edition.

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CORRESPONDENTS REPORTS

(Continued from page 14)

again, Bodyguard moved, and Handsome cracked the table in half. With his challenger barely conscious, Bodyguard covered him for the win.

In other bouts: Sir Christopher Michaels defeated Gino Caruso ... S.D. Jones defeated Kodiak Bear ... Tony Atlas won a battle royal ... Sal Bellomo pinned Gino Caruso ... Tony Atlas defeated Bastion Booger by disqualification.

Minneapolis, MN *(Correspondent—Jason Biagi):* U.S. champion Big Van Vader had to work a little harder than expected in defending his title against former champion Hacksaw Duggan in the main event of this exciting WCW card. The determined challenger tore into Vader as soon as he entered the ring. Duggan powerslammed the 450-pounder and almost got a pin, but Vader's manager, Harley Race, dragged Duggan out of the ring by his legs.

Duggan responded to the interference by slamming Race onto a ringside press table. Desperate to save his manager, Vader left the ring and regained the advantage by ramming Duggan against a ringpost. It looked as if Duggan was finished, but he fought back and eventually leveled the champion with two running clotheslines.

At that point, Race tried again to distract the referee, but this time Duggan suplexed him into the ring. As Duggan landed, however, Vader splashed onto him and got the three-count.

In other bouts: Hulk Hogan & Sting beat Avalanche & Brutus Beefcake ... Dustin Rhodes pinned Arn Anderson ... The Nasty Boys beat WCW World tag team champs Harlem Heat in a non-title match ... Johnny B. Badd pinned Bunkhouse Buck ... Marcus Bagwell & The Patriot beat Paul Orndorff & Paul Roma.

Big Van Vader lifts Hacksaw Duggan for a reverse power bomb. The U.S. champ held off the determined patriot after Duggan became too preoccupied with Harley Race.

Tony Anthony was able to handle Jerry Lawler when they clashed one-on-one inside the ring. After Buddy Landell got away with some trickery, however, Anthony lost his Smoky Mountain title to "The King."

Knoxville, TN *(Correspondent—Henry Phillips):* Jerry Lawler is known for all his accomplishments in the USWA, but on this *Smoky Mountain* card, he got a shot at Tony Anthony's heavyweight title.

The special timekeeper for the bout was Buddy Landell, and "The King" was glad for that, since Landell and Anthony had been feuding for weeks and hadn't resolved their differences. The match was supposed to have a 60-minute time limit; after about 20 minutes of furious action, Anthony choke-slammed Lawler and went for the pin. Before referee Mark Curtis could make the count, Landell rang the bell.

Confused, Curtis questioned Landell about what happened. Landell tried to convince him that the time limit had expired, but Curtis knew he was up to something and slid out of the ring and fired Landell from his position. As Curtis climbed back onto the ring apron, Lawler accidentally crashed into him, knocking him to the arena floor.

That allowed Landell to enter the ring, piledrive Anthony, and put Lawler on top of him. Landell then helped the woozy referee back into the ring to make the three-count, and Lawler was given the belt.

In other bouts: D-Lo Brown pinned Brian Logan ... Boo Bradley defeated Chris Candido ... Rick Morton defeated Unibomb ... Buddy Landell defeated Tracey Smothers ... Tony Anthony pinned Buddy Landell ... The Heavenly Bodies wrestled The Gangstas to a no-contest ... Rick Morton won a battle royal. □

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2852	Bulletboys	3531	Fleetwood Mac	3841	Melissa Etheridge	7521	Robert Plant	8262	Van Halen
2881	Butthole Surfers	3673	Foreigner	6382	Metallica	7832	Rod Stewart	6341	Vince Neil
9433	Catherine Wheel	4362	Genesis	2651	Michael Bolton	7651	Rolling Stones	8461	Violent Femmes
9431	Cheryl Wheeler	8462	George Thorogood	6431	Midnight Oil	7652	Rollins Band	9271	W.A.S.P.
2461	Cinderella	4461	Gin Blossoms	6443	Mighty M. Bosstones	7871	Rush	9272	Warrant
2656	Collective Soul	4721	Grateful Dead	6463	Ministry	7223	Sacred Reich	9441	White Zombie
2663	Concrete Blonde	4731	Great White	6252	Mitch Malloy	7261	Santana	9463	The Who
2683	Counting Crows	4737	Green Day	6672	Morrissey	7374	Sepultura	9454	Wilson Phillips
2682	Coverdale/Page	4735	Green Jelly	6682	Motley Crue	6262	Sinead O'Connor	9671	World Party
2693	Cowboy Junkies	4861	Guns N' Roses	6681	Motorhead	7541	Skid Row	9371	Yes
2726	Cracker	4274	Hardline	6721	Mr. Big	7523	Slaughter	6251	YngwieMalmsteen
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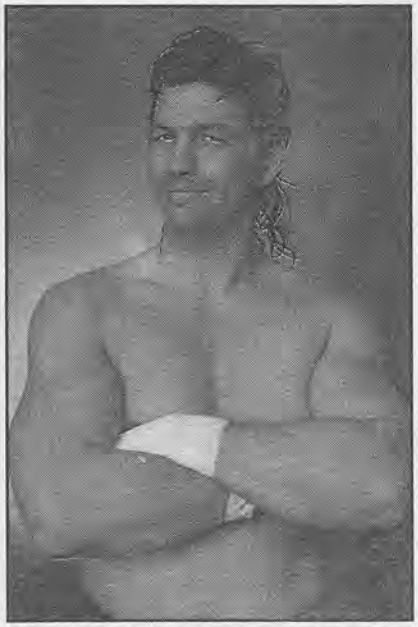
(Continued from page 16)



Travel burnout is not a major problem for Al Snow, a man who wrestles in many different federations. He says other wrestlers should follow his lead and dedicate more time to keeping themselves in shape.

dents. How do you handle such a busy schedule. You must be exhausted from all the travel!"—Sara Jennings, Dearborn, MI

A: **"Exhausted isn't the word for it," replied Snow. "Sometimes it's hard for me to keep track of what town I'm in or who I'm wrestling the next night. But it doesn't matter. I know I can beat anyone in the world. I beat Sabu plenty of times. Now I'm the greatest wrestler Smoky Mountain has ever seen. That's why the people down there call me 'Simply Sensational' Al Snow. The reason I'm so good in the ring night after night is that I keep my body in great shape. Other wrestlers should model themselves after me. The Rock 'n' Roll Express, for example. Those guys used to be good a long time ago, but now they're old and out of shape. They think they can beat me and my new partner, Unibomb. It won't happen, because I am the best!"**

***

Q: "I'd like to ask The Fantastics—Bobby Fulton and Tommy Rogers—a question: I'm glad to see you guys wrestling in WCW. Do you think you have a chance to win the WCW World tag team title?"—Ann Dunn, Decatur, GA

A: **"We wouldn't have gone there if we didn't think we had a shot," responded Rogers. "Me and Bobby have wrestled practically everywhere there is to wrestle, and we think that gives us an edge over a team like Harlem Heat. It's tough getting ahead in WCW right now because there are a lot of teams around. The Nasty Boys, Paul Roma and Paul Orndorff, Marcus Alexander Bagwell and The Patriot ... now we hear the Steiners might be on their way. The way Bobby and I see it, the more competition, the better. We respect all those teams, but we're not afraid of any of 'em. We know we can beat any of them, and we'll prove it!"**

***

Q: "My question is for Jerry Lawler: Now that you are both Smoky Mountain and USWA champion, what is the next title you will go after?"—Shawn Wilkins, Cheyenne, WY

A: **"There are so many titles out there for me to choose from, Shawn," said Lawler. "I don't know which one I'll choose to win next. Probably the WWF title. The thing is, Jack Tunney is afraid to give me my title shot. I'm already the best broadcaster in the WWF. Tunney's afraid that if I win the title, I'll quit my job as broadcaster. Then there will be nobody to educate all the morons out there in TV land. I'll also let you in on another secret, Shawn: I've heard rumors that a lot of the WWF wrestlers are afraid to wrestle me. They know I'd embarrass them. If I don't get my shot at the WWF World title, maybe I'll go after the NWA title. Or maybe me and Jeff Jarrett will go after the WWF tag team belts! Or maybe both! That's a great idea. I'm glad I thought of it!"** □

Now that he has won both the Smoky Mountain and USWA titles, Jerry Lawler might go after the WWF World or tag team title ... if President Jack Tunney would give him a shot!

BACK ISSUES OF THE Wrestler

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July 1986/Stories include: King Kong Bundy, Koloff vs. Graham, Ric Flair.
December 1986/Stories include: Flair, Bockwinkel, Hogan, Gilbert, Nikita.
January 1987/Stories include: Heenan, Garvins, DiBiase, Borne & Sawyer.
February 1987/Stories include: Magnum T.A., Gordy, Steamboat-Roberts.
March 1987/Stories include: Windham, Nikita, Adias, Savage-Steamboat.
April 1987/Stories include: Hogan, Luger, Rich-Lawler, R&R Express.
June 1987/Stories include: Flair-Windham, Can-Ams, Rhodes-Murdoch.
July 1987/Stories include: Cornette, Hyatt, Luger, Harts, Adams, Hansen.
August 1987/Stories include: Can-Ams, Luger vs. Nikita, Fantastics, Koko, Nord.
November 1987/Stories include: Williams, Luger, Hogan-Khan, Rich.
December 1987/Stories include: Hogan, Windham, Lawler, Flair, Beefcake.
January 1988/Stories include: Nikita-Taylor, Warriors, DiBiase-Duggan.
March 1988/Stories include: Hogan, Luger-Sting, Calgary, Demolition.
May 1988/Stories include: Horsemen, Hogan, Flair, Fantastics, DiBiase.
June 1988/Stories include: Sting-Flair, DiBiase, Kerry, Nikita, Zenk.
July 1988/Stories include: Fantastics, Hogan, Windham, McMahon, Rich.
October 1988/Stories include: Rhodes, Fantastics, Hennig, Roberts-Rude.
November 1988/Stories include: Midnight Ex., DiBiase, Bossman, Brody.
January 1989/Stories include: Kevin Von, Rougeaus, Horsemen, Hogan.
February 1989/Stories include: Warriors, Ultimate-Hogan, Bigelow-Gordy.
May 1989/Stories include: Steamboat, Savage-Hogan, Dusty, Valentine.
June 1989/Stories include: Steamboat, Martel, Ultimate-Savage, Luger, Flair.
July 1989/Stories include: Warrior, Hogan-Bravo, Flair-Steamboat, Rhodes.
September 1989/Stories include: Flair-Funk, Piper, Demolition, Zeus.
October 1989/Stories include: Hogan & Beefcake vs. Zeus & Savage, Hyatt, Hayes.
November 1989/Stories include: Piper-Savage-Hogan, Dusty, Flair-Funk.
December 1989/Stories include: Muta-Sting, Andre-Ultimate, Windham.
January 1990/Stories include: Pillman, Hogan, Rich-Luger, Tully & Arn.
February 1990/Stories include: Sting-Luger, Gordy, Martel, Hogan-Brown.
March 1990/Stories include: Steiners, Flair-Funk, Hogan-Zeus, Survivors.
April 1990/Stories include: Hogan, Luger, Woman, Piper-Heenan, Travis.
June 1990/Stories include: Hogan, Rockers, Koloffs, Horsemen, Flair-Luger.
July 1990/Stories include: Poffo, Dusty-Savage, Luger-Flair, Doom, Blanchard.
August 1990/Stories include: Hogan-Warrior, Embry, Demolition, Doom.
September 1990/Stories include: Ultimate, Haynes, Luger, Doom, Tugboat.
October 1990/Stories include: Hogan-Earthquake, Ultimate, Flair, Rich.
November 1990/Stories include: Luger & Sting, Beefcake, Race, Steiners.
February 1991/Stories include: Sting-Vicious, Muta-Steamboat, Warrior, Hogan.
March 1991/Stories include: Hogan-Warrior, Piper, Cornette, Steiners.
April 1991/Stories include: Hogan, DiBiase, Skyscrapers, Luger, Zenk.
May 1991/Stories include: Hogan-Slaughter, Flair, Eaton, Sheik-Bobo.
June 1991/Stories include: Hogan, Nastys, Sting, Flair, Cactus Jack.
July 1991/Stories include: Flair-Fujinami, Nastys, Steiners, Savage.
August 1991/Stories include: Slaughter, Luger-Nikita, Hennig, Poffo.
September 1991/Stories include: Steiners vs. Sting & Luger, LOD, Cactus.
November 1991/Stories include: Luger, Steamboat, Piper, Global.
December 1991/Stories include: Flair-Hogan, Beverlys, Sting-Luger.
January 1992/Stories include: LOD, Badd, Hughes, Roberts, Gossett.
February 1992/Stories include: Flair, Simmons, Santana, Backlund.
March 1992/Stories include: Pillman, WWF title, Rude, Mountie-Hart.
April 1992/Stories include: Bearer, WCW magic, Hennig & Flair, LPWA.
May 1992/Stories include: Flair, Anderson & Eaton, Piper, Rhodes, USWA.
June 1992/Stories include: Flair-Hogan-Justice, Gilbert, Warrior, Vegas.
July 1992/Stories include: Rude, LOD, Madusa, Monsoon, Nurse Vanessa.
August 1992/Stories include: Warrior, Bunkhouse, Undertaker-Roberts, Sting.
September 1992/Stories include: LOD, Repo vs. Crush, Kleen, Freebirds.
October 1992/Stories include: Bulldog & Warrior, Lee, Martel-Tatanka, Austin.
November 1992/Stories include: Crush, Reed, Hennig, Sting, Rogers.
December 1992/Stories include: Hogan, Roberts, Simmons, Rock 'n' Rolls.
January 1993/Stories include: Ramon-Savage, Sting-Roberts, Disasters.
February 1993/Stories include: Hart, Rick Steiner, Backlund, Austin.
April 1993/Stories include: What's in/out, Ramon, Steamboat, Patriot, Tatanka.
June 1993/Stories include: Sting-Vader, Doink & Christopher, Steiners, Lawler.
July 1993/Stories include: Smith-Vader, Ramon, Rhodes, Tatanka, Bravo murder.
August 1993/Stories include: Hogan-Yokozuna, Jarrett, Vicious, Hart, Payne.
October 1993/Stories include: Vader & Vicious, SummerSlam lists, sHart-Lawler.
November 1993/Stories include: Rude-Flair, Hogan, Luger, Jannetty, Bodies, Power Bombs.
December 1993/Stories include: Luger, Sting & Flair, Fytch, Luna, Austin.
January 1994/Stories include: Hogan, Rude-Flair, Bagwell & Scorpio, Cornette.
February 1994/Stories include: Vicious & Arn, Yokozuna, Vader-Cactus, steroids.
April 1994/Stories include: Hogan, Savage-Crush, Flair, Blayze, Adams, Boss.
May 1994/Stories include: Royal Rumble, Hulk minus bulk, Boss, Douglas-Sherri.
July 1994/Stories inclllude: Flair vs. Hogan, DiBiase, Crockett, Douglas, WWF.
August 1994/Stories include: Cactus-Vader, M.O.M., Hart & Yokozuna, Badd.
October 1994/Stories include: Undertaker, Cactus, Scorpio-Sabu, Funk, Sheik.
November 1994/Stories include: Hogan, Owen, Bret, Badd, Lawler.
December 1994/Stories include: Hogan, Luger, Vicious, Austin, Bomb.
January 1995/Stories include: Holiday gifts, DiBiase, Badd, Backlund, PG-13.
February 1995/Stories include: Hogan, Steiners, Undertaker, Sabu, Honky Tonk.

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The Wrestler SPOTLIGHTS...

Every month, *The Wrestler* will comb through its extensive photo files and shine its spotlight on an outstanding wrestler, manager, or tag team. We'll present unforgettable highlights in the action-packed careers of the sport's greatest stars, culled from the most extensive photographic archives anywhere in the wrestling world!

THE UNDERTAKER

THE UNDERTAKER is, without a doubt, one of the most feared, popular, and unusual men in wrestling. With his deep-set eyes and pale complexion, he is fascinated by the afterworld. Over the last year, he has been practically unbeatable in the WWF, dominating feuds with Yokozuna and Irwin R. Schyster.

A native of Texas, Undertaker began his career in the CWA, using monikers like The Master of Pain and Punisher before settling on "Mean" Mark Callous.

He was eventually signed by WCW manager Teddy Long to replace Sid Vicious as Dan Spivey's partner in The Skyscrapers, but he lost his position when Vicious returned after recovering from a collapsed lung. This started a feud between him and Vicious that has yet to be settled and still flares up occasionally today.

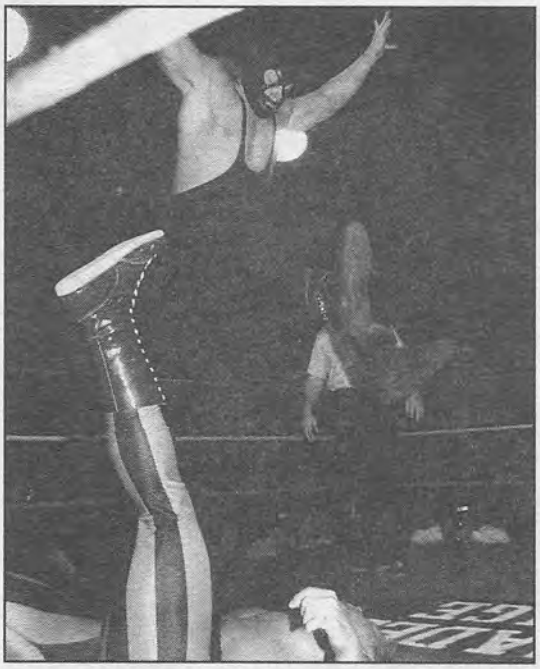
He entered the WWF in mid-1990 as The Undertaker, demolishing opponents with his "tombstone" piledriver. Along with rulebreaking manager Paul Bearer, he shocked fans by luring The Ultimate Warrior onto the set of the "Funeral Parlor," where he stuffed him into an airtight coffin. Luckily for Warrior, officials pried open the coffin before he suffocated. This sparked a feud and a series of "bodybag" matches.

When that feud was over, Undertaker began to pursue the WWF World title, which was held by Hulk Hogan. He defeated Hogan for the belt at Survivor Series '91 after Paul Bearer distracted the referee while he piledrived Hogan onto a chair. Less than a week later, he was struck with his own urn and pinned by Hogan, but the belt was held up, and Hogan went on to recapture it.

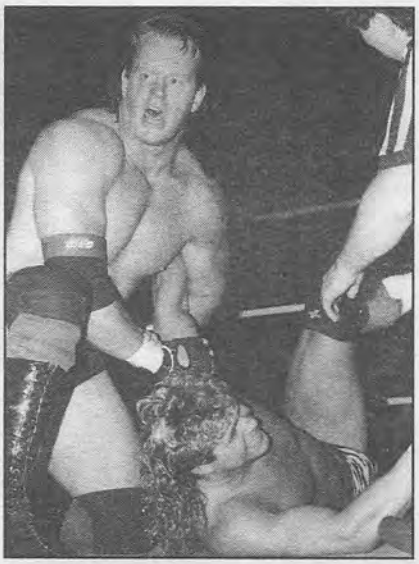
During his WWF tenure, he has also feuded with Jake Roberts, Kamala, Papa Shango, Giant Gonzales, and manager Ted DiBiase, who brought in The Evil Undertaker to antagonize him. He defeated that man at SummerSlam '94, and he hasn't been heard from since. Undertaker has also battled Yokozuna and other rulebreakers in "casket matches" all over the world. To win that type of match, you must lock your opponent in a casket.

From time to time, Undertaker has slumped, but only, it seems, after an opponent stole his magical urn. He says the urn is what gives him the power to beat the federation's toughest rulebreakers.

With convincing victories over Yokozuna and Schyster, Undertaker seems to be on the brink of making a serious run at another WWF World title. For now, he must be content with some time in our "Spotlight."



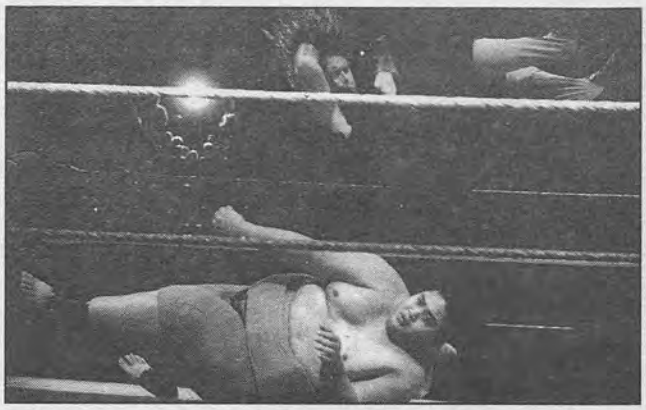
▲April 1989: Before he was The Undertaker, Undertaker had several identities, one of which was The Punisher. The masked man certainly lived up to his name!



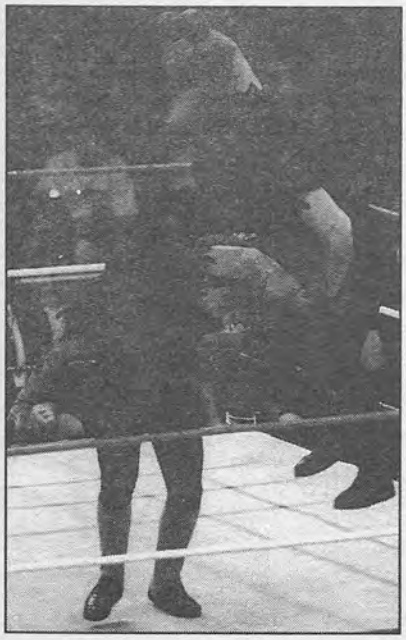
▶July 1990: By the time this man moved to WCW, he was calling himself "Mean" Mark Callous. Callous was best-known as a member of Teddy Long's Skyscrapers, but he also gave Brian Pillman fits.

▲January 1992: The Undertaker first encountered Sid Vicious in the WWF when Undertaker was a rulebreaker. The roles are reversed today, but the feud hasn't been settled.

▲March 1991: This was one of the scariest incidents in WWF history. Undertaker and Paul Bearer locked The Ultimate Warrior into an airtight coffin. It sparked a long, intense feud.



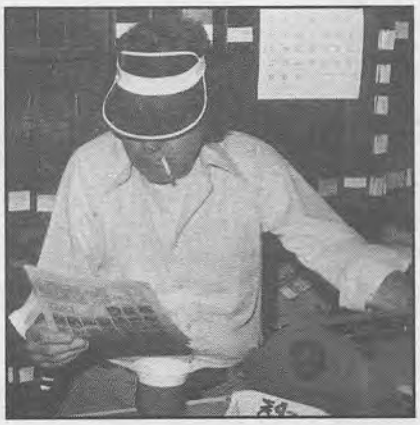
▲September 1993: Undertaker failed in his quest to beat Yokozuna when the Samoan was WWF World champ, but thoroughly dominated him in their more recent bouts. He even beat in a series of "casket" matches.



◀August 1994: Two Undertakers? Well, sort of. Ted DiBiase brought an impostor Undertaker into the WWF; his stay didn't last long. The real 'Taker rid the wrestling world of him at SummerSlam '94.

MATT BROCK'S LOOKING BACK

May 1978 Boris Malenko vs. Ronnie Garvin



DECIDED TO FINALLY clean off my desk one day this winter. Hard to believe it's been two years since I last did it. My God, I'm getting old. The only desk that looks as bad as mine is Bill Apter's. Scratch that ... his is much worse.

In one of the larger piles of miscellaneous papers, files, and undistinguishable items, I found a clipping of an obituary from a small Florida newspaper. There was no date on it, but I knew it was from some time in the last year. The obituary was for one of the greatest rulebreakers of all-time, "Professor" Boris Malenko. After a quick check of my files, I discovered that Malenko died on September 1, 1994. For some reason, I had never gotten around to paying tribute to him. Until now, that is.

I remember Boris Malenko best as *the* master of the Russian chain match. Sorry, Ivan Koloff. For those of you who have never witnessed one, there's nothing quite like a Russian chain match. With leather straps binding their wrists, two men are linked together by a seven-foot chain. There's no chance to run away. You have to stand your ground and fight. The only way to win is to touch each corner of the ring, dragging your opponent along for the ride.

This may not sound too brutal by today's standards. A typical ECW card will see preliminary wrestlers

Malenko's forehead was cut early in the match, but he didn't care. He was toying with young Ronnie Garvin. He weakened him by dropping an elbow on him. The real carnage was yet to come.

Malenko took pride not only in beating his opponents, but also in making them bleed and suffer. He truly enjoyed tearing up an opponent's forehead with a chain.

use more foreign objects in one match than Abdullah the Butcher and The Sheik used during all of the '60s, '70s and '80s, but, believe me, Russian chain matches are only for the toughest of the tough.

Many opponents foolishly challenged Malenko in this kind of specialty match. Many opponents also lost to Malenko in this kind of specialty match. Malenko traveled all over the world, taking on anyone willing to step in the ring with him. One of those foolish enough to do so was a young wrestler named Ronnie Garvin. That's right, "The Man With The Hands Of Stone," the man who held the NWA World title for an hour or so in 1987.

The match took place in Knoxville, Tennessee, in a smoke-filled arena crowded with flag-waving Americans all hoping to see Malenko go down in defeat. There were so many people there that I had trouble getting my cold beers back to my seat without spilling them. Kept bumping into people who couldn't wait to see Malenko lose to the young hero. *Sorry, folks,* I thought. *Ain't gonna happen.*

Garvin had this twisted idea that it was his patriotic duty to wrestle Malenko in a Russian chain match. He was primed for the toughest match of his career, and that's exactly what he got. Malenko just eyed Garvin from across the ring. He had nothing to fear. He was the master waiting to give this student a quick and painful lesson in Russian combat.

When the match started, Malenko immediately took control. Garvin tried to mount an offensive, but quickly realized that he had entered the Devil's playground. Garvin tried to get away from Malenko to catch his breath, but the Russian used the chain to drag him back into his clutches. Malenko continued his brutal assault on the helpless Garvin, pummelling him to the brink of unconsciousness; then he'd yank on the chain to bring him back to his feet.

He continued this sadistic torture for almost 40 minutes. Garvin had yet to attempt any type of meaningful offense. Malenko used the heavy links of the iron chain to open a gash on Garvin's forehead and laughed when the blood began to flow. Malenko had already been bleeding for some time now from an earlier blow from Garvin, but I don't think he noticed.

With blood streaming down their faces, the two continued to battle as the crowd rallied behind Garvin one last time, trying to rejuvenate the American. It was futile, though, because Garvin was doomed.

Finally ... mercifully, Malenko touched each of the four ring corners. Garvin was spared from any permanent injury, but he had many wounds left to remind him of the match. The physical scars are barely noticeable on Garvin's body today, but I bet memories of that night still haunt him in his dreams.

Many men are still haunted by memories of the pain they suffered in their Russian chain matches against the master, "Professor" Boris Malenko. It is a fitting way for this sadistic rulebreaker to be remembered. □

By the time, Malenko was ready to end the match, Garvin's face was a bloody mess. "The Professor" taught him a lesson in sadism, but showed some mercy by touching all four corners of the ring and ending the match.

THE Wrestler

TOP 10

1 **DIESEL**
356, Las Vegas, NV
(1) WWF World champion

2 **BIG VAN VADER**
450, Denver, CO
(3) U.S. heavyweight champion

3 **JEFF JARRETT**
230, Nashville, TN
(4) WWF Intercontinental champion

4 **BRET HART**
234, Calgary, Alberta
(9) No. 2 contender: WWF World title

5 **HULK HOGAN**
275, Venice Beach, CA
(8) WCW World champion

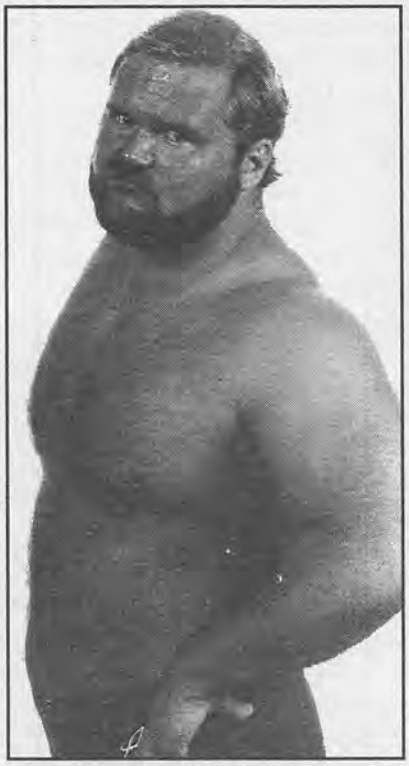
6 **STING**
260, Venice Beach, CA
(2) No. 5 contender: WCW World title

7 **RAZOR RAMON**
287, Miami, FL
(5) No. 6 contender: WWF World title

8 **SHANE DOUGLAS**
223, Pittsburgh, PA
(-) ECW heavyweight champion

9 **BRIAN CHRISTOPHER**
230, Memphis, TN
(-) USWA Southern champion

10 **ARN ANDERSON**
249, Minneapolis, MN
(-) No. 4 contender: WCW World title



Arn Anderson

TAG TEAMS

1 **HARLEM HEAT**
Combined weight: 550 pounds
(3) WCW World tag team champions

2 **THE SMOKIN' GUNNS**
Combined weight: 465 pounds
(1) WWF World tag team champions

3 **THE NASTY BOYS**
Combined weight: 585 pounds
(2) No. 1 contenders: WCW World tag title

4 **MARCUS BAGWELL & THE PATRIOT**
Combined weight: 491 pounds
(7) No. 2 contenders: WCW World tag title

5 **THE ROCK 'N' ROLL EXPRESS**
Combined weight: 453 pounds
(6) Smoky Mountain tag team champions

6 **RANDY SAVAGE & STING**
Combined weight: 495 pounds
(-) No. 3 contenders: WCW World tag title

7 **THE BUSHWHACKERS**
Combined weight: 499 pounds
(-) No. 1 contenders: WWF World tag title

8 **ELI & JACOB BLU**
Combined weight: 517 pounds
(-) No. 2 contenders: WWF World tag title

9 **THE HEADSHRINKERS**
Combined weight: 520 pounds
(4) No. 3 contenders: WWF World tag title

10 **DOUG GILBERT & TOMMY RICH**
Combined weight: 489 pounds
(8) USWA tag team champions

WCW

World Champion:
HULK HOGAN
(C) 275, Venice Beach, CA

1—BIG VAN VADER
(1) 450, Denver, CO
2—HACKSAW DUGGAN
(6) 280, Glens Falls, NY
3—JOHNNY B. BADD
(3) 235, Macon, GA
4—ARN ANDERSON
(4) 249, Minneapolis, MN
5—STING
(2) 260, Venice Beach, CA
6—RANDY SAVAGE
(7) 237, Sarasota, FL
7—DUSTIN RHODES
(8) 254, Austin, TX
8—ALEX WRIGHT
(–) 222, Berlin, Germany
9—BUBBA ROGERS
(–) 310, Cobb County, GA
10—AVALANCHE
(5) 502, Montreal, Quebec

WWF

World Champion:
DIESEL
(C) 356, Las Vegas, NV

1—JEFF JARRETT
(1) 230, Nashville, TN
2—BRET HART
(3) 234, Calgary, Alberta
3—BAM BAM BIGELOW
(–) 368, Mt. Laurel, NJ
4—THE UNDERTAKER
(6) 328, parts unknown
5—KING KONG BUNDY
(7) 446, Atlantic City, NJ
6—RAZOR RAMON
(2) 287, Miami, FL
7—SHAWN MICHAELS
(5) 234, San Antonio, TX
8—DAVEY BOY SMITH
(4) 245, Leeds, England
9—LEX LUGER
(8) 265, Chicago, IL
10—HAKUSHI
(–) 231, Tokyo, Japan

USWA

USWA Champion:
BILL DUNDEE
(C) 219, Melbourne, Australia

1—BRIAN CHRISTOPHER
(1) 230, Memphis, TN
2—JERRY LAWLER
(2) 234, Memphis, TN
3—SPELLBINDER
(5) 246, parts unknown
4—GORGEOUS GEORGE III
(–) 221, Charlotte, NC
5—CRUSHER BONES
(–) 269, Memphis, TN
6—BIG DADDY CYRUS
(–) 359, Memphis, TN
7—TOMMY RICH
(4) 248, Hendersonville, TN
8—DOUG BASHAM
(9) 228, Memphis, TN
9—SCOTT STUDD
(–) 235, Atlanta, GA
10—REGGIE B. FINE
(–) 215, Memphis, TN

ECW

ECW Champion:
SHANE DOUGLAS
(C) 223, Pittsburgh, PA

1—MARTY JANNETTY
(–) 230, Columbia, GA
2—HECTOR GUERRERO
(–) 232, Mexico City, Mexico
3—SABU
(2) 220, Bombay
4—CACTUS JACK
(5) 277, Truth or Consequences, NM
5—DEAN MALENKO
(6) 216, Tampa, FL
6—CHRIS BENOIT
(8) 218, Edmonton, Alberta
7—IAN ROTTEN
(–) 281, Philadelphia, PA
8—2 COLD SCORPIO
(7) 222, Denver, CO
9—TASMANIAC
(4) 221, Tasmania
10—TOMMY DREAMER
(–) 245, Yonkers, NY

OFFICIAL RATINGS

Top 10 and Tag Team ratings are based on won-lost records for the past month, quality of opposition, and inherent skill of each wrestler or team. These ratings are compiled by the magazine's editorial board. Most Popular and Most Hated ratings are based on nationwide telephone and arena surveys of wrestling fans and on the volume and character of mail that comes to our offices. All other ratings are based on the official current positions of challengers to the top title in each category; certain titleholders receive an automatic spot in the ratings. The number in parentheses indicates a wrestler's position in that category last issue; (-) indicates that the wrestler was not rated in that category last issue. while (C) indicates the wrestler was champion in that category last issue.

For period ended March 7, 1995

MOST POPULAR

1. **STING**
   260, Venice Beach, CA
   Last issue: No. 1 Most Popular
2. **HULK HOGAN**
   275, Venice Beach, CA
   Last issue: No. 4 Most Popular
3. **DIESEL**
   356, Las Vegas, NV
   Last issue: No. 8 Most Popular
4. **RAZOR RAMON**
   287, Miami, FL
   Last issue: No. 3 Most Popular
5. **RANDY SAVAGE**
   237, Sarasota, FL
   Last issue: No. 2 Most Popular
6. **BRET HART**
   234, Calgary, Alberta
   Last issue: No. 6 Most Popular
7. **DAVEY BOY SMITH**
   245, Leeds, England
   Last issue: No. 9 Most Popular
8. **THE UNDERTAKER**
   328, parts unknown
   Last issue: No. 5 Most Popular
9. **LEX LUGER**
   265, Chicago, IL
   Last issue: No. 7 Most Popular
10. **HACKSAW DUGGAN**
    280, Glens Falls, NY
    Last issue: unrated

MOST HATED

1. **BIG VAN VADER**
   450, Denver, CO
   Last issue: No. 1 Most Hated
2. **SHAWN MICHAELS**
   234, San Antonio, TX
   Last issue: No. 3 Most Hated
3. **OWEN HART**
   227, Calgary, Alberta
   Last issue: No. 2 Most Hated
4. **BOB BACKLUND**
   234, Princeton, MN
   Last issue: No. 4 Most Hated
5. **JERRY LAWLER**
   234, Memphis, TN
   Last issue: No. 5 Most Hated
6. **JEFF JARRETT**
   230, Nashville, TN
   Last issue: No. 7 Most Hated
7. **KING KONG BUNDY**
   446, Atlantic City, NJ
   Last issue: No. 6 Most Hated
8. **TATANKA**
   250, Pembroke, NC
   Last issue: No. 9 Most Hated
9. **IRWIN R. SCHYSTER**
   248, Syracuse, NY
   Last issue: No. 8 Most Hated
10. **SID VICIOUS**
    318, West Memphis, AR
    Last issue: unrated

CUMULATIVE RATINGS

These ratings are based on the past 10 issues of this magazine. We have examined our ratings for each of these issues in our Top 10 and Tag Team categories only, and assigned each position a point value: 10 points for a first-place rating, nine for second place, and so on. The point values for all wrestlers in the past 10 issues have been compiled, with a possible maximum of 100 points. Each issue we'll present the top five finishers in each category. While our regular ratings reflect the past month, these cumulative ratings give an indication of wider trends in the sport.

SINGLES

1—HULK HOGAN ..... 73 points
2—BRET HART ..... 67 points
3—DIESEL ..... 57 points
4—RAZOR RAMON ..... 54 points
5—STING ..... 43 points

TAG TEAMS

1—THE NASTY BOYS ..... 81 points
2—MARCUS BAGWELL & THE PATRIOT ..... 63 points
3—THE HEADSHRINKERS ..... 48 points
4—THE ROCK 'N' ROLL EXPRESS ..... 44 points
5—PAUL ORNDORFF & PAUL ROMA ..... 42 points

SMOKY MOUNTAIN

Smoky Mountain Champion:
BOBBY BLAZE
(C) 222, Charlotte, NC

1—**TONY ANTHONY**
(1) 235, Bucksnort, TN
2—**BUDDY LANDELL**
(2) 236, Los Angeles, CA
3—**BOO BRADLEY**
(3) 310, parts unknown
4—**MUSTAFA SAED**
(-) 244, Atlanta, GA
5—**TRACEY SMOTHERS**
(4) 227, Atlanta, GA
6—**D-LO BROWN**
(10) 305, Bronx, NY
7—**AL SNOW**
(-) 232, Lima, OH
8—**UNIBOMB**
(8) 345, parts unknown
9—**RICK MORTON**
(7) 228, Memphis, TN
10—**SCOTT ARMSTRONG**
(-) 212, Marietta, GA

INTERNATIONAL

Triple Crown Champion:
TOSHIAKI KAWADA
(C) 245, Tizhigi, Japan

1—**STEVE WILLIAMS**
(1) 265, Norman, OK
2—**MITSUHARU MISAWA**
(2) 247, Saitama, Japan
3—**SHINYA HASHIMOTO**
(3) 287, Gisu, Japan
4—**BIG VAN VADER**
(4) 450, Denver, CO
5—**KENTA KOBASHI**
(5) 261, Tokyo, Japan
6—**NOBUHIKO TAKADA**
(7) 231, Yokohama, Japan
7—**STAN HANSEN**
(6) 322, Borger, TX
8—**CHRIS BENOIT**
(8) 218, Edmonton, Alberta
9—**PERRO AGUAYO**
(9) 215, Zacatecas, Mexico
10—**GARY ALBRIGHT**
(10) 340, Billings, MT

AAA: AAA Champion—Perro Aguayo; 1—Konnan; 2—Octagon; 3—El Hijo Del Santo; 4—La Parka; 5—Eddy Guerrero; 6—Rey Mysterio Jr.; 7—Cien Caras; 8—Psicosis; 9—Miguel Perez Jr.; 10—Blue Panther.

ACW: ACW Champion—T. Rantula; 1—Shane Douglas; 2—Tito Santana; 3—Rick Martel; 4—Cactus Jack; 5—Ron Simmons; 6—2 Cold Scorpio; 7—Tasmaniac; 8—Glenn Osbourne; 9—Tommy Dreamer; 10—Scotty Flamingo.

IWCCW: IWCCW Champion—Greg Valentine; 1—Tito Santana; 2—Rick Martel; 3—Scott Putski; 4—Bastion Booger; 5—Koko B. Ware; 6—Tony Atlas; 7—Johnny Gunn; 8—Jimmy Snuka; 9—Joe Savoldi; 10—Metal Maniac.

MTW: MTW Champion—Bruiser Bedlam; 1—Dan Severn; 2—J.T. Lightning; 3—Rock Stevens; 4—Machine Gun Kelly; 5—Sean Casey; 6—Denny Kass; 7—Bobo Brazil Jr.; 8—Chris Carter; 9—Al Snow; 10—Scott Summers.

PWA: PWA Champion—The Hater; 1—Jerry Lynn; 2—Charlie Norris; 3—Randy Gusto; 4—Jesse Hennig; 5—Punisher; 6—Horace the Lunatic; 7—Dan Jesser; 8—Tommy Ferraro; 9—Blake Beverly; 10—Derrick Dukes.

PWF: PWF Champion—Italian Stallion; 1—Russian Assassin II; 2—Flaming Youth; 3—Austin Steele; 4—Black Scorpion; 5—Terry Austin; 6—Chris Hamrick; 7—Cruel Connection II; 8—Star Ryder; 9—Troy Conyers; 10—Tyrone Knox.

WWA: WWA Champion—Nikolai Volkoff; 1—Frank Finnegan; 2—Akita Kaos; 3—Gus the Greek; 4—Ed Atlas; 5—Jim McPherson; 6—East L.A.; 7—Paul White; 8—Jason Headings; 9—John Rotten; 10—Scott The Body.

WWWA: WWWA Champion—Jack Hammer; 1—Glenn Osbourne; 2—Derrick Domino; 3—Super Nova; 4—Ace Darling; 5—Jimmy Snuka; 6—Mr. Motion; 7—Metal Maniac; 8—Rick Martel; 9—Bobby Piper; 10—Harley Lewis.

RATINGS ANALYSIS

Every month, this column will tell fans how we go about rating over 200 wrestlers in 20 different categories. It is a behind-the-scenes look at the most important—and respected—ratings system in the sport. This column is vital reading for all wrestling fans

He's baaaaaack! At press time, it appeared all but certain that **Ric Flair** was returning to WCW. Only four months after he was beaten soundly and cleanly in a "loser-must-retire" match by WCW World champion **Hulk Hogan** at Halloween Havoc, the "Nature Boy" was giving every indication that he wasn't content to watch wrestling from a front-row seat. Why else would he interfere in the Hogan-**Big Van Vader** SuperBrawl V match?

Flair says wants to be part of the action … perhaps as a manager, but more likely as an active wrestler. Immediately after Flair lost his "final" match to Hogan, our office was flooded with mail supporting the 10-time world champion.

Ric Flair

Hogan is great, but Ric Flair will always be my all-time favorite wrestler, wrote Scott Runyon of Denver, Colorado. *He will be missed. Wrestling won't be the same without him. I wish he never agreed to the stipulations in that match with Hogan.*

Countless other readers expressed pretty much the same opinion.

Things have changed in the months since then, however. When Flair made a surprise appearance at Clash of the Champions XXX in Las Vegas in January, rumors that he wanted to return as an active wrestler, manager, or both started flying. To our surprise, some fans, even quite a few who labeled themselves major Flair fans, wrote to tell us that they hoped those rumors weren't true.

Ric Flair may be full of himself, and he might like to do his share of trash-talking, but I always thought he had class, wrote Steven Tuttle of Decatur, Georgia. *I expected him to retire with class as well. If he returns as a wrestler, my opinion of him will definitely go down a notch.*

We received hundreds of other letters expressing similar sentiments. Flair has often remarked that he doesn't mind it when people boo him, because it shows how good he is at getting them agitated. If Flair does decide to put the tights on again, he could zoom right back up to the top of our Most Hated list by the time his first match is over. It seems like a lot of wrestling fans, maybe even some of those who cheered when they saw Flair appear at SuperBrawl, hate it when wrestlers go back on their word.

On the subject of returns … In addition to gunning for the WWF World tag team title, **The Heavenly Bodies** are once again among the top contenders to the Smoky Mountain tag team title. SMW Commissioner **Bob Armstrong** allowed them to return to the federation nine months after they lost a "loser-leaves-Smoky-Mountain" match to **The Rock 'n' Roll Express**. **Jim Del Ray** and **Tom Prichard** are feuding with **The Gangstas**, but have hinted that they would like another shot at the Rock 'n' Rolls.

He's calling himself what? So much for **Brutus "The Barber"** … er, **Brutus "The Butcher" Beefcake's** plot to turn against Hulk Hogan and help **Kevin Sullivan** and his **Faces of Fear** destroy the "Hulkster."

Beefcake had a run-in with Faces of Fear teammates Sullivan and **Avalanche** at a TV taping in Orlando. Sullivan blamed Beefcake for tag team match losses to Hogan and **Randy Savage** as well as **Marcus Alexander Bagwell** and **The Patriot**. Sullivan and Avalanche walked out on Beefcake after the loss to Hogan and Savage. During a subsequent interview, Kevin attacked and piledrived "The Butcher."

Brutus Beefcake?

Apparently Beefcake is thinking seriously about using the moniker **The Man With No Name** as he wrestles. Also, from what we understand, he has left the Faces of Fear, but hasn't decided whether he wants to reconcile with Hogan. So, for the time being, he is really neither a rulebreaker nor a fan favorite. He is caught somewhere in between. For that reason, we have taken him off our Most Hated list.

Perhaps he should get together with **Big Bubba Rogers**. The two of them have enough identities between them to hold their own battle royal.

See you next month! If you have any questions or comments regarding our ratings or this column, please send them to us. Write to: "Ratings Analysis," c/o THE WRESTLER, Box 1148, Fort Washington, PA 19034. □

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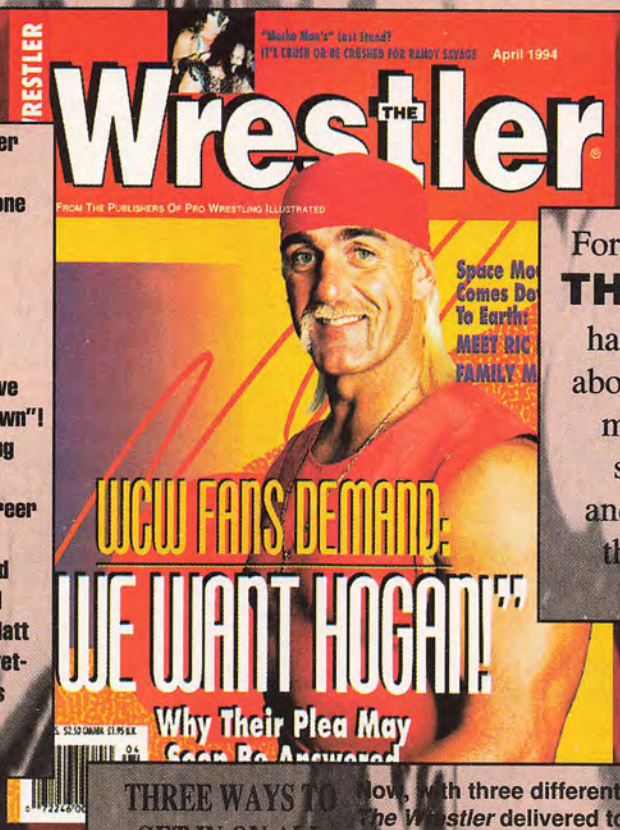

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